Working in Remote Countries:
CAT in New Zealand, Thailand-Burma, French Indochina,
Guatemala, and Indonesia
by Dr. Joe F. Leeker

I) NEW ZEALAND

In late 1950, Max Springweiler, who still owned C-47 VR-HEX leased to CAT at that time, was offered the position of CAT’s Charter Manager for Indochina.¹ So it was him who arranged the charter of several C-46s to New Zealand in 1951. Springweiler recalls: “We had a very interesting area of operations, for example, the big strike in New Zealand. ‘All wheels will stop if your strong arm wills it.’ Even the ships propellers did not turn. Traffic between the north and south islands of New Zealand across the Cook Strait fell victim. The ‘English sickness’, as the clever organization of this strike was called, stopped everything. It was cold and freezing on one side of the Cook Strait with millions of tons of coal available on the other. Don and I wanted to help. […] If possible the planes were to take paying cargo from Hong Kong to New Zealand. First I attempted to obtain the necessary permits, initially from the Australians, and then from the New Zealand Consulate. The Australian authority flatly refused to let us land with commercial cargo. The New Zealanders gave us a restricted permit. […] Above all we hauled coal, and soon the extreme plight was overcome.”²

On 12 April 51, the first two of four CAT C-46s arrived at Auckland, New Zealand for a three-month lease to Straits Air Freight Express (SAFE Air). In June 1951, CAT Bulletin reprinted an article previously published by the New Zealand Herald that illustrated CAT’s arrival in New Zealand: “With the arrival of two Curtiss Commando planes at Whenuapai Airport near here [that is near Auckland] this afternoon, a new phase in CAT’s operations began. It was a grand day for the arrival, and the machines touched down within twenty minutes of each other, almost ending a long journey which started at Tainan last Sunday. These planes, together with a third expected soon, will haul freight across Cook Strait, the stretch of sea separating the North from the South Island, a flight of about 70 miles. The Commandos leave here tomorrow morning for Paraparaumu Airport, near the capital city, Wellington. Paraparamu will be base in the North Island, and Woodbourne Airport [near Blenheim], base in the South Island. […] We are of course surprised and proud that a New Zealander, and a woman at that, will manage CAT’s affairs here. When I drove from the city out to the airport this afternoon, I felt pleased with the assignment. But when I found that a Mrs. Olive King,³ a former Wellington girl, was in one of the machines, I was more than pleased. […] Two of the flyers, Hudson and Porter, came with me in the office car to the city. […] The two fliers commented on the fresh air, the tidy lay-out of the city as seen from above, and the sunshine. They were pleased with the courtesy received from officials at the airport, saying they had been treated much worse in some other places about the world. […] They were getting together with the rest of the crews for a Scotch and soda at the invitation of Mr. T. N. O’Connell, the manager of Straits Air Freight Express, Ltd.”⁴

¹ Springweiler, Pioneer Aviator in China, p.314.
² Springweiler, Pioneer Aviator in China, pp.239/40.
³ CAT employee Ollie King had been sent from Hong Kong to New Zealand as “Area Manager of the South Pacific” (“Hong Kong Hi-Lites”, in: Bulletin, vol. IV, no. 5, June 1951, p.5).
2 CAT C-46s leased to SAFE (Straits Air Freight Express, Ltd), New Zealand: B-846 at Norfolk Island on 26 July 1951 and B-840 at Paraparaumu on 5 July 51 (both in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9)

In July 1951, *CAT Bulletin* published another article about CAT’s activities in New Zealand, this time written by W. C. Donaldson: “Many CATs may wonder what we are doing in far-away places like New Zealand – a job of course. New Zealand is made up of two islands, divided by the Cook Strait, and all traffic between the north island and the south island must cross this narrow stretch of water. In order to provide rapid and efficient service throughout the entire country, the New Zealand Railways maintain an airfreight service between the railroad terminus at the south end of the north island and the north end of the south island. It is a short freight shuttle, the kind of business that CAT has specialized in since its infancy. The shuttle is done by Straits Air Freight Express under contract to the railways, and CAT in turn is under contract to SAFE. New Zealand is one of the most air-minded countries in the world, and the Cook’s Strait freight-lift is but one of many projects using modern air techniques. For this job SAFE has ordered specially modified Bristol freighters with large cargo opening in the nose and has designed special loading equipment to cut turn-around time to a minimum. While the equipment is on order, it has not yet arrived. This is the main reason for CAT being in New Zealand, to pinch hit until this highly efficient equipment arrives and gets into action.

While statistics are dull, a few points may be interesting: Assigned to Operation Railhead (cable address of the Ministry of Railways) are four C-46 Curtiss Commandos. The objective is three flying and one in maintenance. Payload on the short 72 mile flight is 14,000 pounds or
7 short tons. Flights are made with VHS voice and no radio operators are carried. Night flying is done when weather conditions are suitable and when loading and unloading can be accomplished during off hours. The first two planes carried sixteen thousand pounds of maintenance spares and equipment, including one Pratt and Whitney R-2800 engine, and the third carried more than a ton of additional spares with it. The third plane also carried two members of the New Zealand Presbyterian Mission who had recently come from the Chinese Mainland and were waiting to return home. Who has the real headache on this operation? South-Pacific-Area-Manager Olive King, relieved of her duties as Hongkong station manager, is heading-up the show ‘down under’ and undoubtedly thinks she has. But we think perhaps the Chief Engineer may give her an argument. This is the job of maintaining aircraft over 7,000 miles from their home base. Shipping parts by surface is a long process and cargo space from Hongkong is scarce. Since CAT’s C-46s are the only airplanes of that type in that part of the world, there can be no relief by ‘borrowing’, that cooperative arrangement which kept all three of the airlines going in China in the old days.

“Personalities ‘down under’ are Olive King, native of Wellington and South Pacific Area Manager; CAT veteran pilots: Captains Felix Smith, Dave Davenport, Johnny Plank, Kirkpatrick, Hudson and Porter; Chief Engineer Burkett, Chief Mechanic Jim Stone; and Mechanics Dasco, De Guzman, Ricero and Solares. Rog Shreffler went down for communications but has returned, well satisfied. What is life like down under? Olive has told us a lot of nice things about its advantages, but we always considered that to be the mutterings of a loyal native – you know, like the California real estate agents. Anyway, we note there is no lack of volunteers, so Ollie must be right. We hear Norm Schwartz has taken his golf clubs. All returnees are enthusiastic about their trip and are ready for another one when it comes up. The actual operation is located in two small towns in the country, but everyone seems to enjoy it and we assume there will be an occasional trip to the larger centers like Wellington. The forth plane left Hongkong on the fifth of May headed for Singapore, carrying a ship’s crew. At Singapore, it dropped the load of passengers and picked up a Fiji crew who were being repatriated to Nandi. From Fiji the plane went on to join the Railhead. One outstanding feature of Operation Railhead has been the enthusiasm and cooperation of our hosts in New Zealand. Mr. O’Connell, managing director of Straits Air Freight Express has been most helpful in every respect and it is due to his efforts and those of Mr. E. A. Gibson, the Director of Civil Aviation that CAT was able to get the operation started so successfully. This is not to minimize the cooperation from many other sources. The best indication of this is I believe the cryptic cable from King paraphrased here – ‘ARRIVED ON FRIDAY – TEST RUN ON SATURDAY – OPERATIONS BEGIN MONDAY.’ CAT’s down under.”

During those three months in New Zealand, i.e. between 15 April and 15 July 1951, CAT carried a lot of things, including sacks of malt, fruit, vegetables, cereals, oysters, frozen fish, furniture, tires, cars, and even a racehorse. “One day after the last of CAT’s Commandos left New Zealand, Straits Air Freight Express Ltd., for which the American planes had been

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7 “The New Zealand Operation will close on July 15th. One plane, B-840, arrived in Tainan Sunday. The other planes will return soon after July 15th as possible” (Letter dated 3 July 51 sent by CAT’s Joe Orlowski to Joe Rosbert, in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1). CAT had used C-46s XT-840, XT-844, XT-846, and XT-864 in New Zealand, which were reregistered as B-840, B-844, B-846, and B-864 by July 1951. Photos of C-46 B-864 “down under” were published in: Rosbert, The Pictorial History of Civil Air Transport, pp. 198/9.
flying, suffered a severe set-back. On Friday, July 27th, one of the infant airline’s new Bristol freighters overshot the main runway at Paraparaumu Airport and was badly damaged. The accident is expected to put the freighter out of use for some months. It left one Bristol to carry the entire service. […] A Wellington report said the next day: ‘The most likely assistance offering will be from Civil Air Transport … whose Commando aircraft have just ended three months’ chartered flying on the run (Cook Strait). … Whether CAT could charter the aircraft to the service again or offer other aircraft is not known.’ However, three days later Dakotas of the State-owned National Airways Corporation were maintaining the service. […] When it comes to hauling freight, particularly, Americans are regarded here as the best in the world. […] The Transportation Superintendent of our Railways Department, Mr. A. J. Ede, told me here in Auckland that he was completely satisfied with the service the Americans were giving. In exactly three months, CAT’s planes carried 17 million pounds of goods across Cook Strait; they flew 96,600 miles in 1300 crossings. This was a great effort to a country in the throes of a water-front strike.”

On 17 July 1951, the General Manager of the New Zealand Government Railways sent a commendation to CAT for the “excellent job” CAT had done.

(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.7, August 1951, p.16)


Olive King, the South Pacific Area Manager, even wrote a poem about CAT’s operation in New Zealand:

**NEW ZEALAND NOTES**

by

Olive King

By the time you read this column
Our story you will know,
’Cos a plane is due for service
And back to base must go.
Dave’s heading north for warmer climes,
And Pinky’s going too,
Ng So will work the radios,
And Karl complete the crew.
Jim Burkett left the other day,
And it seems fairly plain
We’ll soon have finished up this job
And all be back again.
Meanwhile we’re very busy
At the job we came to do
And varied are the cargoes
That our planes keep flying through.
Because our planes are down here
The North Island still has beer,
For we bring up the sacks of malt
That brew this glass of cheer.
We carry fruit and vegetables,
And cereals and such,
And of furniture removals
We have had by far too much.

We bring varieties of food
And for a tasty dish,
We offer loads of oysters
Or crates of frozen fish.
Tires we carry often,
At cars we’ve had a fling,
We even flew a racehorse,
Too bad he didn’t win!
I can’t name all our cargoes
For there isn’t room to spare,
Just whatever’s needed urgently
Is shipped out by Rail and Air.
A “hunting, shooting, fishing” crowd
Are CATs when work is through,
Kirkpatrick, Dave & Felix,
All joined a whaler’s crew.
And Pinky’s hot on hunting
Of rabbits, pigs, and deer
I’m not referring here to WAAFS,
So please don’t start to jeer.
Then there’s skiing at the Chateaus,
Right now there’s lots of snow,
And fishing weekends in the sounds,
Where our crews often go.
So this here it’s mid-winter
And the weather’s cold as ——,
We get our fun when we are off,
And still work hard as well.

*(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.7, August 1951, p.16)*

More photos of CAT’s New Zealand operation were kindly submitted by Lee Gossett who had received them from John Barry:
More photos of CAT’s New Zealand operation can be found in the color slide collection of E.C. Kirkpatrick, preserved at the Air America Archives at Richardson, TX:

The above photos were all taken at Norfolk Island in 1951 (photos nos. 1KP-19-SC 1568, 1KP-19-SC 1565, 1KP-19-SC 1558, 1KP-19-SC 1543)

This photo was taken at Woodbourne Field, NZ, in 1951 (photo. no. 1KP-A1-SC 1454)
The Chairman of the Board,
C.A.T. INCORPORATED,

Dear Sir,

C.A.T. Incorporated has now completed its work of maintaining temporarily the New Zealand Government Railways Department's air freight service across Cook Strait and I should like to express my appreciation of the excellent job that your Company has done.

The Company took over at a time when the airfreight traffic became suddenly inflated through shipping breakdowns and when the ground handling facilities were accordingly somewhat inadequate. However, all the requirements of the service were met in a most efficient and willing way and I can say that the Department has never had better co-operation than that extended by the C.A.T. personnel, aircraft and ground staff alike. I should like to mention particularly Captain Felix Smith and Captain David G. Darroch to whom nothing was ever too much trouble and whose efficiency and courtesy did much to ensure the smooth running of the service and I should be pleased if you would convey to these officers, and to the other personnel concerned, my appreciation of their good work.

Yours sincerely,

[Signature]

T. W. Anson

GENERAL MANAGER

(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.8, September 1951, p.3)
II) OPERATION “ICEBOX”: INDONESIA 1951-52

CAT PBY-5A B-819 in the early fifties
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)

After the independence obtained by Indonesia in 1949, internal security problems continued to plague the country, because a wide variety of guerrilla groups still existed, while Indonesia’s armed forces and the National Police Mobile Brigade were poorly equipped and poorly trained. Of the estimated 130,000 dissident men said to have existed in Indonesia in the early fifties, about 4,000 armed guerrillas are said to have been active in South Celebes. “Reports indicate that possibly as many as 4,000 guerrillas may be Communist controlled. [...] The US has provided Indonesia with economic and technical assistance, equipment for its mobile police force. [...] Indonesia has found it difficult to reconcile its independent foreign policy with its economic ties with the US. In February 1952, the Sukiman government fell because of Parliamentary sentiment against accepting a provision of the US Mutual Security Act which was alleged to involve an abandonment of neutrality.”

The situation on Sulawesi was still more complicated at that time: Many of the Minahasa people living in the far north of Sulawesi were Christians who, during Dutch colonialism, had received a better education; politically, they were loyal to Sukarno, and by 1952, one of their commanders, Col. Joop Warouw, had become the commander of the whole island. Since July 1950, the area around Makassar in the south became more and more a center of rebellion against Sukarno. This may be the explanation for an operation that Civil Air Transport started in October 1951, the clandestine exfiltration of Indonesians from the island of Celebes – today called Sulawesi – their training at CIA training camps on Saipan, and their clandestine infiltration back into Celebes by CAT PBY. It is likely that arms and ammunition were also delivered to Celebes in the same way. CAT called this operation “Icebox”, rumors say that the CIA code was “Haversack”. But it is unknown who were those Indonesians trained by the CIA – maybe a

10 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp.7-8.
part of the National Police Mobile Brigade whose support by the CIA was kept secret for political reasons or maybe a group of Minahasa soldiers who wanted to fight the rebellion in the south of Sulawesi.

The first to speak of such an operation was Professor William Leary who, in the prologue to his book *Perilous missions*, described a scene of 19 Indonesians boarding a CAT PBY near the northeastern tip of Celebes on 25 October 1951 for a flight to Clark Air Force Base in the Philippines. But Leary didn’t add enough details, and so Ken Conboy and James Morrison said that the clandestine exfiltration of 19 Indonesians described by William Leary for 25 October 1951 was only an October 1957 operational plan. Of course, there may have been similar operational plans for 1957, but as the memo described by Leary is preserved in the Air America Archives at Dallas, it is easy to see that it was made for 1951. The text says:

“EAGLE FLIGHT

**OBJECT**
To effect secret seaplane pickup of 19 Indonesians at NE tip of Celebes Island and deliver them to Clark Field.

**TIME**
At the very earliest date possible. We are already late. Arrival of plane at rendezvous or pick-up point must be at dawn. Unless we can improve the date, plane should arrive at rendezvous dawn 25 Oct.

**RENDEZVOUS POINT**
Off peninsula near Mt. Batoe Angoes Baroe at North end of Lembeh Strait. Coordinates: 1 degree 31 minutes North, 125 degrees 14 minutes East.

**PROCEDURE FOR FLIGHT**
Plane should proceed to Clark Field direct or via Kadena. At Clark Mr. Jack McNeal will board the plane for the flight to the rendezvous and return to Clark. McNeal should be placed on the crew manifest as flight engineer. (The crew will consist of Americans only.)

After Clark field the plane will proceed as on a flight to New Zealand for a commercial charter load. Technical landing clearances [a handwritten note adds: ‘action for CJR’] will be arranged at Labuan and another point beyond Labuan. Plane will land at Labuan, refuel and while proceeding to next point will receive radio message informing pilot charter has been cancelled and instructing him return home. Plane will then fly to rendezvous for pick up of Indonesians.

**EQUIPMENT**
Sufficient number of rubber boats which may be needed to carry passengers from land to the plane at the rendezvous. U.S. dollars and Indonesian Gilders.

**PROCEDURE FOR PICK-UP**
Plane should first circle near Mt. Batoe peninsula to receive recognition signals as follows:
A. Green light flashing Morse letter ‘A’ - - safe to land.

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12 Leary, *Perilous missions*, p.1
B. White light flashing letter ‘B’ - temporarily unsafe to land but return later same day.

C. Red light flashing letter ‘C’ - unsafe to land; return next day.

Plane is not to reply any signal, merely carry on above procedure. If plane arrives after daybreak reception party will use same color code with large panels on ground.

Plane should not enter Lembeh Strait but approach from NNE direction. Current flows through Strait North to South. Plane should land offshore, taxi within one mile of peninsula to receive boats. Plane should use its boats if it receives signal ‘BOATS’ in Morse code from light or waving white flag from shore. Indonesians will have their own boats if possible.

The leader of the Indonesians will identify himself verbally in English as Jack Harjono. Crew of plane will reply ‘Greetings from Val Mac and Sam.’

If first attempt is unsuccessful plane should use technical failure excuse and make landing at Menado where an Indonesian will attempt to make contact to arrange details of second pick up attempt. If landing at Menado is not possible plane should land at Jolo or Zamboanga and make second attempt at dawn first day thereafter weather permits. If contact man at Menado does not meet plane, second attempt to pick-up at dawn should be made the first day thereafter weather permits.

Contact man at Menado will use the same identification as above. If physical contact is impossible contact man will try to pass note.

Crew of plane should not initiate any contact with local people except those necessary to maintain cover story.

If a second pick-up attempt is not successful plane should return to Clark Field for further instructions.

NOTE

Menado airfield is not equipped for night operations.”

Memo “Eagle Flight”, at: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1

There are several details that prove that this was a real 1951 operational plan and not just a contingency plan for 1957: In the memo, the cover story was to be that the PBY was on a charter flight to New Zealand, and it was in 1951 that CAT operated several charters to NZ.
This plan is much too detailed for a contingency plan: You cannot determine the exact rendezvous point in a contingency plan, as this point may be inaccessible when the plan has to be put into action. CJR, the person who was to deal with the landing clearances, was C. Joseph Rosbert, CAT’s Director of Operations in 1951, but Rosbert was promoted to Vice-President and Assistant General Manager in early 1953\textsuperscript{16} and may not have had to deal with things like landing clearances in 1957. Finally: The crew was to bring with them Indonesian Gilders. But Indonesian Gilders wouldn’t make sense in 1957, when Indonesia had already introduced the Rupiah,\textsuperscript{17} and so, as can be seen below, in March 1958, CIA agents James D. Haase and Tony Poe brought with them a box of Indonesian Rupiahs when they went to Indonesia.

\begin{center}
\begin{figure}
\centering
\includegraphics[width=\textwidth]{image.png}
\caption{CAT PBY B-819 at Taipei in October 1953 (UTD/Kirkpatrick, slide no. A3221)}
\end{figure}
\end{center}

The details of this memo and the remark “we are already late” make suggest that it had been made for the first flight to Indonesia. It seems that one of the technical problems on these flights had been refueling, as in memo no. CP/52-73 dated 14 January 1952, Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot – who was informed about “Icebox” – asked the Director of Maintenance – who was probably not informed about this covert operation – about the “availability of two hand pumps with sufficient hose to refuel C-46 aircraft”, the “availability of drummed gas” at Tainan, and the “minimum amount of time in which this drummed gas could be loaded on an aircraft.” In the same memo, Rousselot also asked: “New Subject: PBY – Would you please advise all the possible weight that you think could be stripped from the PBY, including such things as replacing the floor with aluminum sheeting, possibly taking out certain items of equipment which could be replaced a few days later, etc. In other words, stripping everything

\textsuperscript{16} Leary, \textit{Perilous missions}, p.156.
\textsuperscript{17} See “Indonesian rupiah”, at: \url{http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Indonesian_rupiah}
possible from the aircraft or making any adjustments possible without disrupting the condition of the aircraft which would affect the airworthiness certificate, etc.”^18 Apparantly, this did not include the blisters, which had already been removed when PBY B-819 flew with TRAPAS as F-BDRN.^19 But the intention is clear: The range of the PBY was to be increased, and the hand pumps and drummed gas suggest that landings and refueling at sea were intended. The remark “new subject” may perhaps be intended to make believe that the hand pumps had nothing to do with the PBY, which at that time was still a project aircraft not owned by CAT, but by Western Enterprises Inc – or maybe an island like Tawi-Tawi in the southern Philippines, where fuel could be brought by C-46s, was taken into consideration as a refueling point for the PBY.

1: Chief Pilot Robert Rousselot, Memo no. CP/52-73 of 14 January 52 (in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F2)

Apart from the mission of 25 October 1951 described above as “Eagle Flight”, the dates of two more Icebox missions are known: One was from 4 to 11 March 1952, and the other one began on 18 March 52 – but of course there may have been more Icebox missions flown by CAT’s PBY B-819. While the date of 18 March 52 is only known from a radio message that CAT’s Chief of Flight Operations H. B. Cockrell sent to Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot, PBY pilot Don Teeters and others,^20 a little bit more can be said about the Icebox mission flown between 4 and 11 March 52, as apparently CAT’s Connie LaGueux wanted to know what the mission had cost. The answer written on 10 April 52 by CAT’s Chief of Flight Operations H. B. Cockrell is preserved at Dallas, and together with a hand-written note sent by Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot to CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert on 10 March 52, this answer gives the following picture: On 4 March, the crew of Pilot Don Teeters, one more Captain, one Flight Engineer, and one Flight Operator flew PBY-5A B-819 from Taipei (TPE) to Clark AFB in the Philippines. On 5 March, the aircraft was refueled for the first time at Clark and proceeded to the sea-rendezvous point (“Point S”) in Indonesia. Here, B-819 was refueled for the first time at sea^21 and apparently made some local flying – maybe delivery of weapons or picking up of Indonesian trainees. The PBY was then refueled a second time at sea and returned to

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^19 See the photo of F-BDRN at [http://cansonet.free.fr/Operateurs/Compagnies/body_compagnies.html](http://cansonet.free.fr/Operateurs/Compagnies/body_compagnies.html).
^21 Open sea refueling was done with US naval vessels (Leary, Manuscript, p.129, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1).
Clark AFB – probably on 7 March 52. At that time, the aircraft probably brought some Indonesian trainees for Saipan. Probably on 8 March, B-819 got its second load of fuel at Clark and returned to “Point S” in Indonesia, perhaps with another load of weapons, ammunition or whatever. Probably on 9 March, the aircraft was refueled a third time at sea in Indonesia and made some more local flying – maybe another distribution and pick-up run. Evidently on 10 March 52, PBY B-819 was refueled at sea for the fourth time and returned to Clark AFB. On 10 March, CAT’s Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot (“Rouss”) wrote to CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert (“CJR”): “B-819 completed ‘Icebox’ early this morning. All phases 100% successful. – ETD [= Estimated Time of Departure from] Clark 110200Z [= 11 March, at 2.00 a.m. “Zebra time”, i.e. Greenwich Mean Time] for TNN [= Tainan].” Before taking off for Tainan, B-819 took on gasoline at Clark for the third time.

H. B. Cockrell’s Memo dated 10 April 52 and Bob Rousselot’s note dated 10 March 52 (both in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F2)

It is not known, how often this type of Icebox missions was flown, but of course, the trainees also had to be taken back to Indonesia. As CAT’s second PBY Captain Connie Seigrist, who was transferred to Taiwan on 21 June 1952, doesn’t mention Icebox flights in his autobiography, they probably no longer existed in June 52. Indeed, according to Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot, CAT pilot Donald E. Teeters made 3 or 4 flights to Indonesia in a CAT PBY-5A in the early fifties. But these were small-scale operations. 23

23 Interview conducted by Prof. William Leary with Robert E. Rousselot at Okay, OK, on 10 August 1987, transcript preserved at: UTD/Leary/B43F4.
III) THAILAND-BURMA 1951-52: OPERATION “PAPER”

The main objective of CIA’s Far East operations during the Korean War seems to have been to weaken North Korea and the big supporter of North Korea, i.e. Communist China. As to Red China, this was to be done by supporting local conflicts that might force the Red Chinese Government to withdraw troops from the Korean front line. These operations concentrated on four areas: 1) the southwestern province of Yunnan; 2) North Korea and Manchuria; 3) coastal areas in southeastern China; and 4) anticommunist resistance groups in northwestern China. CAT was involved in supporting all four operations by dropping agents who were to help organize local resistance and or by dropping supplies to those resistance groups. 1) Conflicts in Yunnan province were to be created by remnants of Kuomintang troops that had fled to Burma; CAT’s activities in this context are described in this file. 2) Anticommmunist resistance groups in North Korea and Manchuria were supplied out of Atsugi Naval Air Station in Japan and out of Korea; that is why CAT’s activities in this context are described in my file entitled CAT and Air America in Japan. 3) Conflicts in the coastal areas of southern China were supported out of Taiwan; CAT’s activities in this context are described in my file entitled CAT, Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan III: Work for the US Government. 4) Anticommmunist resistance groups in northwestern China were supplied by CAT’s long overflights over Mainland China; as these flights were carried out by CAT’s airline DC-4 or by a Western Enterprises B-17, they originated in Taiwan; so CAT’s activities in this context are also described in my file CAT, Air Asia, Air America – the Company on Taiwan III: Work for the US Government.

Already in the spring of 1950, Kuomintang Lieutenant General Li Mi had asked US Vice Consul Frederick D. Schultheis at Hong Kong for American help to create a base at the Yunnan-Burma border from which he could launch an army to recapture China, and although the US response was probably very vague, Li Mi gathered a lot of irregular partisans around him and won command of the Nationalist Chinese regular troops in the Burma-Yunnan region. Li Mi himself established his office at Bangkok, where he was introduced to Major General Phao Siyanon, de facto head of Thai National Police, and to CIA man Robert North. Thru his ties with Chiang Kai-shek, Li Mi later even received a double function: Not only was he the commander of the Restoration Army later reorganized as the Yunnan Anticommmunist Army of National Salvation (YANSA), but also governor of Yunnan. But as late as in July 1950, Washington instructed the US chargé d’affaires at Taipei to press the Republic of China government to order its troops in Burma to lay down arms. When, however, in December 1950, more and more Red Chinese “volunteers” appeared on Korean battlefields so that the UN troops risked to be driven out of the peninsula, US President Truman, who wanted to avoid an open war with China, agreed to a plan possibly invented by Alfred Cox: the Li Mi Project. General Li Mi was the leader of the largest contingent of the defeated former Chinese Nationalist army that, in December 1949, had fled from China’s Yunnan province into Burma, where he had settled at Monghsat in the Southern Shan States about 80 miles from the Thai border and established a base camp and training area in this remote and mountainous

26 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, p.50. In February 1951, Taipei formally designated Li Mi’s Restoration Army as the Yunnan Anticommmunist Army of National Salvation (YANSA). Under that umbrella, the 26th Army and its 2 divisions, the 93rd and the 193rd, retained their regular army status. YANSA’s other units received Yunnan provincial army or guerrilla appellations. As governor, Li Mi had full operational and administrative authority over all regular and guerrilla units in his province (p.58).
region. As Li Mi also called on other Nationalist survivors to join his troops, he had gathered about 12,500 soldiers by the end of 1950, but they were poorly equipped. The US hope was to use this army for an attack on Yunnan in order to cause Peking to divert some attention from Korea.

Already in August 1950, a CIA team had travelled to Bangkok and negotiated an agreement with Major General Phao Siyanon, head of the Thai National Police Department, to train members of his police force, calling for the CIA to equip and train 350 Thai police and military personnel as a counterinsurgency force. The aid was to be channeled thru a newly created CIA proprietary, the ostensibly commercial Southeast Asia Supply Company, known simply as SEA Supply, which was incorporated in Miami, Florida. Legal affairs were handled by former OSS man Colonel Paul Heliwell, who had also established the contact between the CIA and Phao, and former OSS man Colonel Sherman B. Joost opened SEA Supply’s offices at 10 Pra Athit Road, Bangkok in September 1950, but later, the offices moved to the Grand Hotel, Bangkok. “Like WEI on Taiwan, SEA Supply equipped, trained advised its clients under an ostensibly commercial contract. Its primary mission was to develop an elite paramilitary police force that could defend Thailand’s borders as well as conduct covert anticommmunist operations into neighboring countries.” In addition to training Thai security forces, SEA Supply would not only support Li Mi’s secret army as it formed in Burma but participate in its mid-1951 invasion of Yunnan. [...] The equipment they delivered was for de facto military units, not traditional police officers. That equipment included mortars, machine guns, rifles, medical supplies, and communications equipment from stocks of World War II matériel stored on American-occupied Okinawa, Japan. Later, SEA Supply added tanks, artillery, and aircraft to the police inventory.”

At about the same time, another source of financial support opened up to Li Mi’s desires: the US military. Soon after the beginning of the Korean War, a US Joint Military Defense Assistance Program Mission was sent to several Far Eastern capitals, including Bangkok. On 8 September 50, Li Mi had a meeting with one of the members of that Mission, USMC Major General Graves B. Erskine, who promised to ask Washington to channel clandestine support for Li Mi’s forces thru the US Military Assistance Program to Thailand. Apparently in early December 50, President Truman approved Operation Paper, supported by the views of the US Departments of State and Defense, while CIA Director Walter Bedell Smith vigorously opposed Operation Paper, arguing that Li Mi’s attacks against Yunnan were only pinpricks that could not divert Red Chinese troops from the Korean front. But President Truman overruled his CIA and so in early 1951, the Americans enlisted Phao and his Thai National Police into Operation Paper.

Of course, CAT was the perfect airlift for feeding and arming Li Mi’s troops, and so Operation Paper, as CAT called the Li Mi Project, commenced on 6 February 1951, when 4 C-46s and 1 C-47 of CAT left Tachikawa for Kadena, Okinawa, where they were to pick up arms and ammunition from CIA stocks. Known pilots were Captain Brongersma in C-46 XT-866, Captain Wells in C-46 XT-868, and Captain Hayes in C-46 XT-870 as well as Captain Snoddy in C-47 XT-813. When the first 3 of them reached Clark Air Base on 6 February,
Snoddy and Wells asked Tachikawa Station for further instructions. At 10.00 a.m. the same day, Joe Orlowski, Assistant Director of Operations at Tachikawa, forwarded that question to CAT’s Director of Operations Joe Rosbert at Taipei, and 2 hours later, Rosbert asked Chief Pilot Bob Rousselot at Bangkok to send the instruction for these 4 planes plus for “one other on way”.\(^\text{35}\) This was a fourth C-46: XT-840. For as the Flight Control Board of 7 February 51 reveals, 4 C-46s (XT-840, XT-866, XT-868, and XT-870) and C-47 XT-813 were all marked “P-FLT”, standing for “Paper Flight”, that is for Operation Paper, the furnishing of CIA weapons from Okinawa to Northern Thailand to support General Li Mi in Burma that began that very same day on 7 February 51.\(^\text{36}\) All of these 5 aircraft were on their way from Tachikawa (TAC) to Kadena, Okinawa (KAD), and 3 of them (XT-840, XT-866, and XT-868) had already continued their way to Clark Air Base in the Philippines (CRK).\(^\text{37}\)

Radiograms of 060802Z for JTAC (by Snoddy and Wells), of 061000L for Rosbert (by Orlowski), and of 061220L for Rousselot (by Rosbert), all in: UTD/UTD/Rosbert/B2F1.

\(^\text{35}\) Radiograms of 060802Z for JTAC (by Snoddy and Wells), of 061000L for Rosbert (by Orlowski), and of 061220L for Rousselot (by Rosbert), all in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1.

\(^\text{36}\) Leary, *Perilous missions*, p.129.

\(^\text{37}\) Leary (“CAT and the Korean War, 1950-1951: A Chronology”, p.16, in: UTD/Leary/B18F8) notes that in early February 51, only 4 aircraft were drawn from Booklift for Paper. But there were 5 of them.
This initial shipment of arms by CAT aircraft included 200 light machine guns, 12 mortars, 150 carbines (.30 caliber), 4 radio sets, and a large quantity of ammunition. But at the beginning, the CAT flights were not the only source of arms and ammunition destined for Li Mi. At the end of February 1951, another CIA arms consignment left the port of Kaohsiung on Taiwan aboard the cargo ship SS Chaiyi, which was operated by the Taiwan Shipping Company. On 10 March 51, the SS Chaiyi arrived at Bangkok with a manifested cargo of

1,200 tons of sugar and other foodstuff, including 20 tons of military cargo that did not appear on the cargo manifest. An aide to Phao Siyanon, head of Thailand’s police, supervised unloading and storage of the weapons at a police warehouse at Bangkok’s port. At the request of Taipei, all subsequent CIA deliveries would be by CAT planes thru the Royal Thai Government central purchasing bureau.39

“All Paper flights were considered ‘secure’ or ‘black’ and thus were routed through Clark Air Force Base and parked at the extreme southern end of the airstrip.”40 Their final destination was Bangkok, from where the arms were to be taken to Chiang Mai or Chiang Rai in Northern Thailand by CAT C-47 XT-813. From there onwards, CAT could rely on the help of the Thai Border Police. For under the direction of James W. “Bill” Lair, “SEA Supply”, the CIA’s cover organization at Bangkok, had established a camp at Lop Buri (T-15), north of Bangkok and was to begin airborne training for selected members of the Thai Police. The purpose was to build up a paramilitary force intended to halt the activities of Chinese-inspired insurgents along Thailand’s borders.41 CAT C-47 XT-813 (“Little Box”, as Kirkpatrick called it42) was permanently assigned to Bangkok under charter to SEA Supply, to be used for this airborne training and also for dispatching police patrols in outlying areas of Thailand so that they could get some operational experience.43

The dual purpose of SEA Supply described above, i.e. training members of the Thai National Police and supporting Li Mi with the assistance of the Thai police, explains that the final delivery of the weapons from northern Thailand to Li Mi in Burma was arranged by the Thai Border Police.44 While the weapons that arrived aboard the SS Chaiyi were sent to Chiang Mai by train, those arriving by CAT planes were flown to Chiang Mai in CAT C-47 XT-813. In both cases, the address was Phao’s police in Chiang Mai, where vehicles of the

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41 Castle, At war, pp.37/8; Trest, Air Commando One, p.117. “The bulk of SEA Supply’s activities was aimed at raising a Thai gendarmerie, later known as the Territorial Defense Police, and still later renamed the Border Patrol Police (BPP). By the end of 1953, 94 BPP platoons, each averaging 45 men, had been trained by SEA Supply and deployed along the Thai frontier” (Conboy/Morrison, Shadow war, p.57).
44 Leary, Perilous missions, p.130; according to Leary, only 3 C-46s and 1 C-47 flew the missions, but the Flight Control Board of 7 February 51 (photo no. 1-TM1-1-PB11 at UTD/Matsis) shows that originally, 4 C-46s were used.
Border Police picked up the cargo – mostly arms – and carried it overland to the border near

Thai Police officers outside and inside CAT C-47 XT-813 and a Thai Police truck waiting to take over the weapons at Chiangmai on 24 and 25 February 1951 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9 photos nos. 1KP-9-PB-A-5-2 and -4 plus UTD/Kirkpatrick/Slide Box A1, color slide no 1KP-A1-SC905)

CAT C-47 XT-813 at Chiangmai on 26 February 51 with a Thai Police truck waiting (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9, photo no. 1KP-9-PB-A-5-9)

Möng Hang. “Using a police training exercise as cover, Phao Siyanon and officers from the ROC and US embassies in Bangkok escorted the weapons to the border. There, Ma Shou-i’s\(^{45}\) mapang\(^{46}\) set out for Möng Hsat in the company of two Americans known as ‘Major’ or ‘Captain’ James Stewart and ‘Lieutenant’ Marks, and with Phao and an escort of Thai police officers. […] The two men were presumably former US Army officers then employed by the CIA. The man known as Marks was Stewart’s primary radio operator. Both would accompany Li Mi’s army into Yunnan to direct airdrops of additional weapons.”\(^{47}\) In reality, James Stewart was a CAT operations officer, and Marks probably was a CAT radio operator.\(^{48}\)

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\(^{45}\) Ma Shou-i was a Yunnanese Muslim who headed a group of armed horsemen (mapang) whose usual business was smuggling (Gibson/Chen, *The secret army*, p.65).

\(^{46}\) *Mapang*: group of armed horsemen (Gibson/Chen, *The secret army*, p.13, note 30).


At the beginning of this operation, CAT C-47 XT-813 flew without any markings, which were added only on 23 February 51 – as the photos below indicate. As the aircraft wouldn’t have to fly unmarked while in Thailand, this makes believe that it also entered Burmese airspace. Initially, Robert Rousselot and Robert Snoddy flew the C-47, then E. C. Kirkpatrick replaced Snoddy, and later Art Wilson and “Dutch” Brongersma replaced Rousselot.

CAT C-47 XT-813 at Bangkok Don Muang airport on 21 February 51: completely unmarked, with the registration being painted on the fin, and after adding the registration XT 813 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9, photos nos. 1KP-9-PB-A-4-17, -26, and -25)

CAT C-47 XT-813 at Chiang Mai on 23 February 1951 after the registration had been added (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9, photo no. 1KP-9-PB-A-4-37)

Apparently, the main purpose of this C-47, which was on charter to the CIA proprietary SEA Supply, was parachute training for units of the Thai Border Police and the placement and recovery of police patrols operating in the border areas of Thailand – SEA Supply’s main task. After every 1,000 hours of operation, the C-47 would be flown to Tainan via Clark Air

49 The text – “CAT C-47 XT-813 at Chiang Mai on 23 February 1951 after the registration had been added” – comes from the detailed description of the slides that can be found in UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9 binder 1.

50 Leary, Perilous missions, p.130.
Base in the Philippines and Hong Kong. As supporting General Li Mi was also among the tasks of SEA Supply, CAT’s agent for Paper flights at Bangkok was, of course, SEA Supply. Other known Paper flights were on 27 February 51 and on 7 April 51 (Captain T. C. Sailer to Bangkok in C-46 XT-842), while on 13 March 51, the Paper aircraft were called back – apparently due to bad weather. Possibly, the Trans-Asiatic Siam C-47 HS-TAC that was leased to CAT in April and May 51 for operations out of Saigon, also made 2 flights for SEA Supply. The two flights that CAT pilot “Doc” Johnson made in C-47 HS-TAC from Saigon to Vientiane and on to Bangkok on 17 April 51 and from Bangkok to Vientiane and back to Saigon on 18 April 51 were possibly “black” support flights for the Thai National Police to their camp at Lop Buri/Kokothiem – SEA Supply’s other protégé. For the official route via Vientiane is rather unusual and the flying time given is rather short for such a long route and also for support flights to Kuomintang General Li Mi. Flying time for a non-stop flight from Saigon to Bangkok in a C-47 would have been 3 hours, for a flight from Saigon to Vientiane about 4 hours, for a flight from Vientiane to Bangkok probably another 3 hours, and support flights to Kuomintang General Li Mi out of Bangkok might have taken 7 or more hours. So the real destination hidden behind the indication “Vientiane” probably was much closer to Bangkok – possibly the Thai National Police camp at Lop Buri/Kokothiem north of Bangkok, which was also supported by SEA Supply and also supplied by “black” CAT flights. 

The flights CAT pilot “Doc” Johnson out of Saigon, including the ones he allegedly made to Vientiane and Bangkok and back on 17 and 18 April 1951 in C-47 HS-TAC (Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013)

As to support to Li Mi, initially, contact between Bangkok and Li Mi’s base in Burma seems to have been difficult so that CAT flew in communications equipment to set up a base radio station. Apparently upon request of CAT’s James Stewart this equipment was installed under the direction of CAT’s Chief of Communications Roger Shreffler who flew to Thailand on 27 February 51. As can be seen below, a radiogram of that day shows the handwritten note: “Go up to Point A”. It is not known what “Point A” stands for – maybe Chiang Mai in northern Thailand, where Shreffler probably left the plane, but possibly also Mi Li’s base at Monghsat in Burma, if the communications equipment was too heavy to be

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55 Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013.
56 For C-47 flying time out of Saigon see the extract from “Doc” Johnson’s log book published in the Indochina section of this file and for flying time of the support flights to Li Mi see below in this section of the file.
carried on horseback all the way from the Thai-Burmese border to Mi Li’s camp at Monghsat and so had to be parachuted.

Radiogram of 271000L (27 February 1951, 10 a.m. local time), showing the note: “Go up to Point A” (in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1)

Apparently, in the beginning, CAT had done quite a lot of things to get “Operation Paper” started without having a formal contract, only upon verbal agreements. For on 5 May 51, CAT’s Vice-President A.T. Cox wrote Joseph Brent of ECA, Bangkok – who was also the head of Bangkok’s OPC (i.e. CIA) Station – that he had sent CAT’s Earle Willoughby to Bangkok “to take up with you and the Sea Supply corporation the signing of formal contracts covering the Paper flights using a C-47 internally in Siam and C-46 aircraft externally.”59 At the same time, Cox asked for commercial cargo that Paper planes could carry on their return flights from Bangkok and for commercial possibilities like cooperation with POAS (Pacific Overseas Airways Siam) and TAAS (Trans-Asiatic Airlines Siam).

General Li Mi and his number 2, General Liu Kuo-chuan, both stayed at Bangkok most of the time and were officially assigned as Republic of China Embassy staff members. At Bangkok, they had good access to communications, to influential Thai officials and to wealthy Chinese supporters. Li Mi made his initial inspection visit to his army at Monghsat in Burma between 24 and 27 December 1950, travelling from the Thai-Burmese border to the camp by horse. He returned in February 51 to evaluate the progress in forming YANSA, then again on 26 March 51 and finally on 10 April 51, leading a number of senior officers. But the main problem of this big army was their poor cohesiveness and discipline, as most of them were irregulars like private armies or mapang groups, and some of them just continued their commercial activities under YANSA’s protective umbrella.60 However, three factors made ignore these problems: Washington’s hope to divert Chinese troops from the Korean front, Chiang Kai-shek’s hope to regain at least a part of Mainland China, and the weather: Li Mi’s army had to be established in Yunnan, where they could be supplied by airdrops, before the heavy monsoon rains of June would make it impossible to move large bodies of troops.61

In April 1951, Li Mi moved north and advanced 60 miles into China, joining local guerrillas and threatening the airfield at Mengsa. But the original plan of a two-pronged ground attack into Yunnan proved too ambitious, and arms deliveries from Taiwan – 1000 rifles – arrived at Chang Mai much too late and so remained unused in a police warehouse.62

61 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, p.69.
62 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, pp.70/1.
On 10 May 51, Li Mi inspected the northern attack force at Mōng Mao, slightly west of the Yunnan border. Many of these soldiers had financial reasons to cooperate with Li Mi, but quite a lot of them preferred to accept the weapons and then pursue personal interests instead of fighting the Communists. The other problem was that Thai-American assistance in arming Li Mi was an open secret by late April 51, and Burma was not happy about it.63

On 24 May 51, Li Mi’s 193rd Division under Li Kuo-hui moved to Mengtung inside Yunnan, and 2 irregular units even moved to Chenk’ang, while a third irregular unit preferred to remain in Burma after receiving YANSA’s weapons. At Mengtung, Li Kuo-hui’s troops quickly cleared a parachute drop zone, and on 5 June 51, the two CAT specialists and some Thai signals experts directed 2 separate CAT C-46 flights over the dropzone. But as both CAT C-46s were unable to locate the dropzone thru the monsoon clouds, they aborted their missions, and on 6 June, a single CAT C-46 returned during a break in the weather and dropped 10 cargo parachutes of weapons. “Ten subsequent C-46 sorties between June 7 and 12 each delivered ten parachutes of cargo without incident. In all, those 11 CAT flights delivered nearly 3,000 rifles and carbines and 160,000 rounds of ammunition and assorted supplies.”64 One of the CAT pilots involved in these drops was “Doc” Johnson. On 4 June 51, he flew CAT C-46 B-146 from Taipei to Kadena, where it was loaded with CIA supplies, and then on to Clark Air Base in the Philippines, and on 5 June, he continued from Clark to Bangkok to deliver the supplies to the customer. On 6 and 9 June 51, his log book shows Doc Johnson flying C-46s B-850 and then B-858 on “local” flights out of Bangkok that lasted 7.5 and 8.2 hours! Evidently, these were weapons and ammunition deliveries to Li Mi’s army at Mengtung in Yunnan Province, Red China, where the cargo was parachuted to the troops.

Supplies dropped at Mengtung in Yunnan Province, Red China (Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013)

Li Mi’s hope had been to conquer the airfield of Mengsa inside Yunnan and to make it a place where support planes could land. But this hope did not materialize. According to former CIA man Walter P. Kuzmuk, one of the problems with Li Mi was the lack of control, as no Agency personnel was with him. At insistence of the Agency, Kuzmuk gave agent McFadden 3 practice jumps, and so at one point, McFadden jumped in for liaison, but he accomplished little.65 On 25 June 51, some of Li Mi’s militia men were within striking distance of Mengsa airfield, the impending collapse of Li Mi’s army was not yet visible, and so Chiang Kai-shek sent congratulations to several senior YANSA officers.

However, 18 miles short of Mengsa airfield, Li Mi’s invasion had reached its “high water mark,”66 for in late June 1951, Communist units drove him back into Burma. On 29/30 June, Li Wen-Huan’s unit crossed into Burma. At the same time, Yao Chao’s unit also retreated into Burma via Mengtung. “Li Mi led his regulars quickly into Burma’s southern Wa states. He left Li Kuo-hui and his 193rd Division at Vin Ngün [inside Burma], where for three

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64 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, pp.74/5 (quotation p.75).
65 Walter P. Kuzmuk, interview conducted by Prof. William Leary at Shady Side, MD, on 26 August 1980, written resume preserved at UTD/B43F1.
66 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, pp.75-78 (quotation p.78).
weeks CAT aircraft flying out of Thailand aidropped rice and other supplies.”

“Doc” Johnson was one of the CAT pilots who made those support flights: On 11 July 51, he brought CAT C-46 B-874 from Taipei to Kadena, where the plane was loaded with CIA cargo, and then flew to Clark Air Base. On 12 July 51, he proceeded from Clark to Bangkok, and on 14 and 15 July 51, he made “local” flights out of Bangkok that lasted 7.4 and 8.4 hours – evidently support flights for Li Mi’s army. On 16 July, he flew back to Hong Kong in C-46 B-850.

Supply drops to Li Mi’s army in Burma on 14 and 15 July 1951
(Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013)

As to the Commander in Chief, “Li Mi, his immediate staff, the two Americans, and the Thai radio operators continued marching south, reaching Lü Kuo-chüan’s Twenty-sixth Army headquarters at Mông Ngen, Burma, on July 21. The next day, Li Mi and the Americans boarded a Thai police helicopter sent to fly them to Thailand. On takeoff, mechanical trouble forced the Westland-Sikorsky helicopter, which was provided by SEA Supply, to make an emergency landing that damaged its tail rotor beyond field repair and slightly injured Marks. After torching the helicopter, the Thai pilots and their passengers, accompanied by YANSA regulars, continued overland to Mông Hsat. They continued on to Bangkok, where the Thai remained as the two Americans later left for Tokyo.” The last significant YANSA unit left Yunnan on 13 July 51. “Li Mi’s forces were numerous but short of food and suffering from low morale. Aircraft staging from Thailand that had once delivered weapons and ammunition were by then dropping food.” From a military point of view, the Yunnan incursion was a debacle. During the whole campaign, Li Mi’s army was supplied by CAT airdrops – reportedly these troops were fed by at least five parachute drops a week by CAT C-46s and C-47s. CAT operations officer James Stewart accompanied Li Mi into Southern Yunnan, before he returned to Japan.

As to CAT, the Thais were a bit reluctant to get deeply involved with Li Mi, and so cover was not always easy and required a lot of imagination. Enos Kirkpatrick recalls one time when “Doc” Johnson flew north carrying golf clubs as ‘cover’, although there were no golf courses in the north. Another incident happened at Bangkok, as Kirkpatrick recalls. SEA

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67 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, p.79.
68 Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013.
69 In July 51, General Liu Kuo-chuan tried to build up another base and a second incursion into China, but this time, within a week, the Nationalist army was driven back into Burma, where they plundered peaceful Burmese border villages (Leary, Perilous missions, p.131).
70 Apparently, this was one of 2 Westland-Sikorsky WS-51As delivered to the Royal Thai Air Force in 1950, i.e. msn WA/H/26 or WA/H/27 (see http://thai-aviation.net/files/Air_Force_Detail.pdf, p.56).
71 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, pp.78-80 (quotation p.79).
72 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, p.81.
75 Leary, Interview with E.C. Kirkpatrick dated 26 April 80, in: UTD/Leary/B15F3.
Supply’s man in Bangkok for handling arrangements was Sherman Joost. One day a sea captain turned up and asked Joost to be supplied. Initially, Joost didn’t know what to do, but as Kirkpatrick had operated the Chez Eve club in Bangkok in 1950, he still knew the cook, and so Kirkpatrick arranged the cook from Chez Eve to supply the ship. On 3 July 51, CAT’s Joe Orlowski wrote to CAT Director of Operations Joe Rosbert: “We have six planes with long range tanks in them now. We are operating our planes in and out of Formosa without any markings, letters, stripes, etc. The only thing we have to identify the aircraft are B-numbers on the tail. The authorities have cooperated with us in this respect.”

The political aspect of this operation was that the whole action had not diverted China’s attention from Korea, but had severely poisoned the diplomatic atmosphere between Burma and the United States, as the Government of Burma knew very well that the Nationalists had been supported by the United States – in spite of all official denials ascribing the alleged support of the Nationalists to gunrunning of private American citizens. American action even forced Rangoon to divert its scarce resources to fighting the Kuomintang forces instead of Burmese Communist and other insurgencies. As early as June 1951, London tried to convince the US to end its involvement with Taiwan’s army, and London knew quite well about the weapons delivered from Okinawa to Mongshat by unmarked CAT-planes, about SEA Supply and their mission of training the Thai National police, but also about the assistance of the Thai police in transporting a considerable portion of the arms to Li Mi. The British also knew about the CAT personnel and the Thai signal experts accompanying Li Mi into Yunnan. So on 22 August 51, Acting US Assistant Secretary of State Livingston Merchant and the CIA agreed that it was time to end US support for the Li Mi operation and to evacuate Li Mi’s regular troops thru Thailand. In the meantime, an arrested Kuomintang general had told the Burmese that from April 51 onwards, Li Mi’s army had received regular American weapons, ammunition and rations to support the invasion of Yunnan. The next step was an Anglo-American démarch, asking the Thai to block transit of arms to the KMT. But nothing happened – apparently Phao’s police took too much profit of this whole affair –, except that an astonished Thai Prime Minister Phibun told British Ambassador Wallinger that all this had only been arranged at the request of an “American clandestine organization”.

In the meantime, Li Mi had settled into Mongshat in Burma and even established a “Yunnan Anticomunist University” there, whose classes started on 5 October 1951. As it seems, “the summer of 1951 saw a sharp increase in sightings of mysterious flights parachuting weapons and other equipment into Mong Hsat. Those were CAT cargo aircraft, primarily twin-engine C-46 Commandos, C-47 (DC-3) Skytrains, and the less common four-engine C-54 (Skymasters).” It should be noted that CAT did not have any DC-4 at that time, but just used a POAS-owned DC-4 on the route from Bangkok to Tokyo. The whole statement is based on reports sent in November 51 by the US Embassy Rangoon to the US Department of State, and the US Embassy at Rangoon had been deliberately kept in the dark about US support to Li Mi. So all of these statements were apparently based on rumors or
maybe observations made by people from outside the operation who did not know the real background. This also explains another statement that goes back to the same sources: “For [CAT] flights transiting Saigon or Danang, pilots filed false flight plans to Rangoon. Cooperative French officials would not notify Burmese authorities of the flights and would later destroy the paperwork. Such subterfuge was unnecessary for similar flights through Thailand, where authorities were less concerned over procedural niceties.”

Again, those reports sent by the US Embassy at Rangoon, which had not been officially informed about US assistance to Li Mi, were apparently based on rumors or misinterpretations of observations, for the US Government wouldn’t have liked to inform French authorities about their secret assistance to Li Mi. Probably, the CAT aircraft seen going thru Saigon and Danang was the Saigon-based CAT C-47 flown for the ECA (Economic Cooperation Administration) or for the US Military Mission Saigon (which would explain the secrecy) – perhaps westward bound to Vientiane in Laos or to Phnom Penh in Cambodia. Nearly all supplies that CAT delivered to Li Mi and to the Thai National Police seem to have arrived at Bangkok, coming in from Clark Air Base in the Philippines as their last stop.

After returning from Yunnan, i.e. in the second half of 1951, Li Mi had the old unpaved runway of Monghsat resurfaced and lengthened to 5,000 feet. Although Burmese sources claimed that twin-engine aircraft landed there, the strip probably only served as a drop zone for CAT aircraft – as long as CAT was allowed to support Li Mi’s troops. For after Washington had decided in late August 51 to back away from Li Mi’s army, the CIA vetoed further supply missions to Monghsat. Chiang Kai-shek supported Li Mi’s request for further aerial support, but did not dare to send in transport aircraft of the Republic of China Air Force. The long term solution was to be Foshing Air Transport Corp, a charter airline founded in March 1951 that had 2 PBY-5As at that time, and these were probably the only aircraft that really landed supplies for Li Mi at Monghsat – but not until February 52. So who supplied Li Mi between September 51 and February 52?

“After their August 1951 decision to withdraw at least Li Mi’s regular army troops from Burma, the State Department and CIA had gained the Defense Department’s support for a three-step removal plan: (1) the CIA would discontinue supplying Li Mi’s army, (2) the Defense Department would cease its monthly cash subsidy to Li Mi, and, finally, the State Department would persuade Chiang Kai-shek to remove his army from Burma. There was no timetable for those three steps and completing them would prove a long and arduous journey. The CIA appears to have ended its support for Li Mi in November 1951” – but probably, its support ended only in January or February 52: In an interview conducted by Prof. William Leary with former CIA man Walter P. Kuzmuk who worked in Thailand at that time, Kuzmuk states: “Li Mi came out for conference – Eric Shilling sent in with helicopter – crashed.” As Li Mi was flown to Taiwan in December 1951 for consultations, and as Eric Shilling was

85 Gibson/Chen, *The secret army*, p.100 (quotation).
86 Sometimes also quoted as Fushing or Fooshing Airlines, but the photo in Legg, *Consolidated PBY Catalina*, p.148, shows the title painted on the aircraft as “Fishing Air Transport Corp.”
87 They were Catalinas XT-1401 msn 425 (B-1401 since June 51) and XT-1402 msn 22020 (B-1402 since June 51), both former Air France aircraft (Legg, *Consolidated PBY Catalina*, pp.148/9; see also http://cansonet.free.fr/Utilisateurs/Compagnies/body_compagnies.html).
89 Gibson/Chen, *The secret army*, pp.114/5. This date was calculated from the fact that Thai Prime Minister Phibun told British Ambassador Wallinger on 2 February 52 “that no supplies for Li Mi’s army had gone through or flown over Thailand for the previous ‘three months’” (p.115).
90 Interview with former CIA man Walter P. Kuzmuk conducted by Prof. William Leary at Shady Side, MD, on 26 August 1980, written resume preserved at UTD/Leary/B43F1.
involved in helicopter work around that time, CIA support must have continued at least thru January or February 1952, as Shilling wouldn’t have been sent to Thailand or Burma without CIA approval. This may also explain why the decision of President Truman to push for the removal of Nationalist Chinese troops from Burma was taken only on 3 March 52. Then, “in April 1952, an American military officer saw Li Mi at his Bangkok home and left $ 25,000 – the Defense Department’s final cash payment.” And step no.3, the repatriation of the Kuomintang troops from Burma, began only in December 1953 and will be dealt with in the next section of this file.

As it seems, at least between late August and November 51, if not until January or February 52, CAT aircraft continued to transport supplies for Li Mi’s army in Burma, but probably they did it the old way, that is flying them to Bangkok by C-46 and then to Chiang Mai by C-47, from where they were probably trucked to Monghsat in Burma. This way of supplying Li Mi’s army could well be hidden within the dual purpose of SEA Supply described above, i.e. training members of the Thai National Police and supporting Li Mi with the assistance of the Thai National Police: Officially, CAT only delivered supplies to the Thai Police, helping them to build up their training camp at Lop Buri (T-15) north of Bangkok, while a good portion of the supplies was really destined for Li Mi. And even after the CIA had ended its support for Li Mi in November 1951 or early 1952, supplies for the Thai National Police continued to arrive at Bangkok. So, if Phao’s Thai police had an interest of their own to continue supplying Li Mi’s army, some of the supplies destined for the Thai Police may have found their way to Li Mi’s YANSA army.

According to newspaper reports such an interest in continuing the cooperation between Phao’s Thai police and Li Mi’s army seems to have been the opium trade: “The newspaper pursued the story in a March 2, 1952, Sunday Observer article datelined Bangkok. The story outlined a system in which YANSA provided opium to Phao Siyanon’s police who, in return, facilitated the flow of arms and ammunition to that army.” Burmese newspaper “stories reported pack animal caravans carrying cargo to Li Mi’s army and returning to Thailand with opium and jade.” As it seems, opium trade between Burma and Thailand had already existed long before Li Mi’s army arrived and was mainly run by Burma’s ethnic Chinese population. As Li Mi’s irregulars also comprised mapangs (groups of armed horsemen) whose “primary function was moving weapons, supplies and opium”, Monghsat also “served as a major entrepôt for opium en route to Thailand.” But in 1951, apparently “opium trade did not brake Burmese laws”, and in Thailand, “the RTG’s Excise Department purchased, processed, and sold opium to licensed dens throughout the country.” But while this drug trade between Burma and Thailand was traditional and may even have been legal according to Burmese and Thai laws, it certainly did not shed a good light onto the American aid to the Thai police. To make things even more complicated, beginning in January 52, the Russians, Peking, and Burma accused the United States of plotting with Chiang Kai-shek to renew attacks against Yunnan thru Burma. And so, also alerted by reports from the US Embassy at Bangkok about the allegedly illegal character of SEA Supply’s activities, on 3 March 52, US President

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92 A photo in Rosbert, The Pictorial History, p.182, shows Eric Shilling in what seems to be a Hiller UH-12, but this is said to have been at Haiphong in 1954.
94 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, p.117.
95 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, pp.104/5.
Truman recommended to push for the removal of Nationalist Chinese troops from Burma – the most difficult part of the three-step removal plan, as Chiang Kai-shek wanted them to remain there.

Fortunately, we have some first-hand accounts of CAT aircraft that appeared at Bangkok Don Muang airport between 1 January 52 and 15 February 52. During several visits to the British National Archives (TNA) at Kew in November 2012, Martin Best unearthed the following details he kindly sent to the author: “TNA file FO 371/101173 dossier FS1041/12/G includes a 3-page minute entitled Reinforcement of K.M.T. in Shan States and dated 18th February 1952. Paragraphs 8 & 9 therein read as follows:

‘8. The only C.A.T. aircraft which have been regularly on DON MUANG airfield for the last month or so are the two C.47s which are clearly marked C.A.T. and are on charter from the old Siamese Company T.A.A.S., with Siamese registrations.’

‘9. Other C.A.T. aircraft which have called at DON MUANG between 1st January, 1952 and 15th February 1952 are:
6th Jan. B.847 - C.47 (DC3)
B.848 - C-46.
18th Jan. B.846 - DC3.
20th Jan. B.860 - C.46.
3rd Feb. B.848 - C.46.
4th Feb. B.817 - C.47 (DC3)
10th Feb. B.860 - C.46
B.817 - C.47 (DC3)**

It seems that CAT chartered TAAS C-47s HS-TAC and HS-TAD quite often, probably for cargo flights between Bangkok and Lop Buri, Chiang Mai, or Chiang Rai, but possibly also for air drops at Monghsat in Burma. As to the CAT aircraft seen at Bangkok, it seems that there were 3 categories: a) The CAT C-47 assigned to work for the Thai National Police for transportation and drops – apparently B-817 at that time, and the 2 mentions of CAT C-47s B-389 and B-847 (registrations that did not exist in the fifties) were probably only wrong sightings of the same aircraft; as this was covert flying, the nature of the flights may have been open to speculations about support for Li Mi. b) The scheduled airline service – CAT C-46 B-848 was the plushed C-46 that had inaugurated the once-weekly CAT passenger service to Bangkok on 4 November 1951. c) CAT C-46s B-846 and B-860 may have been support flights for the Thai National Police going to their camp at Kokothiem/Lop Buri, but of course, the Thai National Police was also the institution that forwarded supplies to Li Mi’s army in Burma.

Even Edwin Stanton, US Ambassador at Bangkok, was concerned about mysterious flights by CAT planes thru Thailand, as he complained to the Department of State in a telex dated 6 February 52, asking any such flights thru Thailand be stopped, and in March 52, British and American consulate personnel in Chiang Mai reported C-47s flying from Danang in Vietnam to northern Thai airfields – flights that had begun in October 1951 and, as it seemed, always transported Chinese male passengers in civilian clothes. As the classes at “Yunnan

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100 Martin Best, e-mail kindly sent to the author on 6 December 2012.
Anticommunist University" started on 5 October 1951, the passengers may have been students who wanted to attend lectures at that university, perhaps belonging to the Chinese minority living in Vietnam. So, the aircraft involved may have been the CAT C-47 that was based at Saigon and assigned to the ECA and the Saigon Military Mission. In any case, the reaction of the US Ambassador clearly shows the political tension and nervousness inherent in the situation that had been created by the American assistance to Li Mi’s army. In February and March 52, Li Mi was still supported by the US military: Although his flight from Thailand to Taiwan in December 51 as well as his return flight in January 52 was made on a CAT plane, the US Army attaché at Taipei arranged for a military aircraft to bring him to Clark Air Base where met with two US Army generals he knew from WWII times, talking about Li Mi’s options. As Li Mi preferred to do what Chiang Kai-shek wanted, future supply flights were to be the arranged by the Republic of China, i.e. by Foshing’s PBY Catalinas.

“Purchased and operated with secret Ministry of National Defense funds, Foshing’s Catalina made its initial flight from Taiwan to Mông Hsât in February 1952. Soon thereafter, the MND funded the purchase of a second Catalina. Over the next 17 months, Foshing Catalinas completed 30 of the 2,900 mile roundtrips between Tainan and Mông Hsât until their final trip on August 27, 1953. Several additional flights were aborted due to weather or mechanical problems. The long-range Catalinas took off from Tainan, Taiwan, at night and flew southwest low over Hainan Island to avoid radar detection. They then crossed Vietnam, Laos, and Thailand to reach Mông Hsât 14 hours after takeoff. Return flights were also at night, passing over the Chinese Mainland in a direct line between Mông Hsât and Tainan. The need to carry extra fuel for the lengthy flights, however, limited payloads to only 1.3 tons.”

As of June 1953, Foshing had delivered 30 tons of supplies. At the same time, CAT continued to support the Thai national Police camp at Lop Buri. From Captain “Doc” Johnson’s log book we know that on 20 and 21 October 52, he flew CAT C-47 B-823 on the route Bangkok-Pt B-Pt B-Pt B-Bangkok – each day resulting in 3.8 hours of flying. On 15 November 52, he made a similar flight of 3.5 hours in the same aircraft. These flights may have been support flights to and then parachute training at the Thai National police camp Lop Buri.

As to the Nationalist forces in Burma, reinforcements began arriving from Taiwan in February 1952. Li Mi’s forces were soon built up to 6-8,000 men. Initially, CAT still flew at least twice weekly from Taipei to Chiang Mai with troops and supplies, and then, probably Foshing took over, occasionally landing at the newly opened strip at Monghsat. This brought forth in summer 1952 a feeble sortie of some 2,000 men into Yunnan. This last attempt at invasion was easily repulsed within a week. Li Mi returned permanently to Taiwan in October.

103 Gibson/Chen, The secret army, pp.97-100.
104 In reality, the PBY acquired in 1952 was Foshing’s third Catalina, B-1403 msn 933 (Legg, Consolidated PBY Catalina, pp.148/9; see also http://cansonet.free.fr/Utilisateurs/Compagnies/body_compagnies.html ).
1952, General Liu taking command of the troops. The results of these incursions can best be seen from the following section of this file: By late 1953, it had become quite clear that the Nationalist irregulars still resident in Burma, who, since October 52, were commanded by General Liu Kuo-chuan, were more interested in controlling the drug trade in the Golden Triangle than in fighting against the Communists. To get rid of them, already in March 53, Burma had turned to the United Nations for help, and eventually, CAT received the contract to carry these troops to Taiwan.

In early 1953, the original raison d’être of SEA Supply’s training program – to operate in the wake of a Chinese invasion – was slowly dissipating, and so Lair proposed to transform the partisan police unit into an elite special operations unit trained for both defensive and offensive roles including cross-border missions. Beginning in April 1953, a total of 400 recruits was trained at a newly built training center at Hua Hin (T-10) in southern Thailand, where eight-month training cycles offered lessons in unconventional warfare, reconnaissance, and parachuting, but the old Thai Police camp at Lop Buri was still functioning. Former CAT pilot Connie Seigrist recalls a flight of 23 May 1953: “Covert flying from Taiwan and Okinawa to Thailand’s interior grass strips with the C-46 became of age during this period. This particular date [23 May 1953], I flew from Taipei to Tainan, then Kadena, loaded the C-46, flew thru Clark AFB for fuel, to Bangkok for fuel, and to Cocotim, Thailand with my load. Flight time [was] 17 hours 48 minutes. [On] 25th May, I returned to Kadena and flew back to Cocotim in the same day with a flight time of 22 hours 41 minutes. Amongst all my flights, I flew a few trips carrying Chinese agents from Taipei or Kadena thru Clark, delivering them to Cocotim or Takhli.” Royal Thai Air Force Base Cocotim or Koke Kathiem, located 10 kilometers northeast of Lop Buri, the place where the CIA had established a training camp for the Thai National Police in 1951, probably was – along with Hua Hin in southern Thailand – one of the airfields used in that training program, so that it may not have anything to do with the KMT units still resident in Burma at that time. On the other hand, as has been seen above, it was precisely the Thai National Police who had managed to get the supplies destined for KMT General Li Mi across the Thai Border into Burma. So somehow, the Border Police was probably still linked with Li Mi’s troops.

Entries from Connie Seigrist’s log book kindly supplied by his son Steve: On 23 May 53, he flew C-46 B-874 from Taipei via Tainan, Clark, and Bangkok to “XXX”, i.e. Koke Kathiem in Thailand. On 25 May 53, he returned from Koke Kathiem (“XXX”) to Kadena, and then flew to Bangkok via Clark, from where he proceeded to Koke Kathiem, now given as “QAC”, another code meaning an airport that cannot be named, and back to Taipei in another 8.15 h flight.

109 Conboy/Morrison, Shadow war, p.58.
110 Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p. 27, at: UTD/Leary/B21F11.
111 Conboy / Morrison, Shadow war, p.44. Lop Buri is located some 140 kilometers north of Bangkok.
112 Castle, At war, p.37.
This is indirectly confirmed by the way CAT treats Operation Paper in their reports. As late as January 54, one CAT C-47 is still listed as flying for Operation Paper for a total of 81 hours. For the same month, the Monthly Report of CAT’s Operations Division notes for Bangkok: “There was little flying operation activity during January. B-858, stand-by aircraft for Operation [RE]PAT, returned to Hongkong as [scheduled flight no.] CT800 the early part of the month and no further schedule flights entered Bangkok.” For February 54, the Monthly Report of CAT’s Operations Division notes 408 C-46 hours for Operation Repatriation and – separated from these repatriation flights – 99 C-47 hours for Operation Paper. The forecast for March 54 even speaks of 800 C-46 hours to be expected for the repatriation flights plus 100 C-47 hours for Operation Paper.

The total hours for February 1954 are broken down as follows:

<table>
<thead>
<tr>
<th>Schedule Flights</th>
<th>Domestic</th>
</tr>
</thead>
<tbody>
<tr>
<td>International</td>
<td>C-46 183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C-46 183</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td>Domestic</td>
<td>C-46 120</td>
</tr>
<tr>
<td></td>
<td>C-47 159</td>
</tr>
</tbody>
</table>

| Booklift               | C-46 32 |
|                        | C-47 47 |

| Advertisement          | C-46 104 |
|                        | C-47 44 |

| Paper                  | C-47 99 |

| North                  | C-46 19 |
|                        | PBY 24 |

| Repatriation           | C-46 40 |
|                        | C-47 43 |

| Charter (Misc.)        | C-46 31 |
|                        | C-47 74 |

| Non-revenue            | C-46 7 |
|                        | C-47 67 |

|                       | International |
|                       | C-46 16 |
|                       | C-46 36 |

|                       | Domestic |
|                       | C-46 4 |
|                       | C-47 9 |

Grand Total: 2,122 hours

CAT total hours flown in February 1954
(CAT Operations Division, Monthly Report for February 54, p.10, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1)

This makes clear that in CAT terminology, Paper now stands for everything that has to do with “SEA Supply”, the CIA cover organization based at Bangkok, and that the main purpose of this C-47 was parachute training for units of the Thai National Police and the placement and recovery of police patrols operating in the border areas of Thailand. In early 1954, this Paper C-47 was B-823, which arrived from Bangkok at Tainan on 2 February 54 for No. 3 service and returned on 10 February. Apparently, it was replaced by C-47 B-811 later in the

year, as it was B-811 that crashed into the Gulf of Siam, in the Hua Hin area, on 20 October 1954, when a wingtip dipped into the water during a low-level turn. At that time, CAT C-47 B-811 had been under charter to “SEA Supply” who itself was under contract to the Royal Thai Police Department: “At the time of the accident the plane was returning to Bangkok after completing three practice paratroop drops at night between 7.30 and 8.30 p.m. The pilot had just finished his last run over the drop area and was at a low altitude when a warning light was accidentally turned on by the dispatcher in the rear of the plane, momentarily blinding the pilot. Before the pilot could recover his vision the plane hit the sea.” Capt. Harry Kaffenberger was the only person to survive the crash, in which co-pilot Y.C. Kan, Flight Operator Y.Z. Chen, and four passengers – 3 Thai policemen and an American – were killed. Capt. Kaffenberger had been picked up by a small fishing boat after swimming for about 15 minutes. The boat immediately returned to the scene of the crash, but found that the plane had already submerged, with no sign of any survivors.

Yet, as late as May 1953, British diplomats speak about CAT aircraft arriving at Bangkok with arms and ammunition for Li Mi’s troops in Burma. From an earlier visit to the British National Archives (TNA) at Kew, Martin Best reports about the following documents: “FO 371/106688 and 106689 deal with the Evacuation of KMT forces from Burma, 1953. Piece FO 371/106688 contains dossiers FB1041/126 to FB1041/168 and FO 371/106689 contains dossiers FB1041/170 to FB1041/200. (FB1041/169 is missing with some other dossiers.) Following discussion at the UN General Assembly, a Four-Power Committee, consisting of representatives from the governments of Burma, Chinese Nationalists, Thailand and USA, had meetings in Bangkok. The dossiers contain letters and telegrams mainly from Bangkok, Rangoon and Washington. At the end of this review, no Chinese Nationalist (KMT) troops had been evacuated although it seemed likely that a token group of 500 might be evacuated before the UN General Assembly reconvened in October 1953. Although no troops had been evacuated (by CAT) there are reports of KMT troops being resupplied from the air by CAT aircraft. For example, FB1041/156 encloses a letter from Mr Steventon, the British Consul in Chiangmai [sic], Thailand about CAT C-47 B-124 arriving at Don Muang with arms for KMT on 12th May and arms and ammunition being dropped at Monghsat on 17th May.”

As it seems, it is not hope that dies last, but suspicion.

119 There was never a CAT C-47 B-124, but of course, it may have been CAT C-46 B-874, which had long range tanks installed (Equipment list, February 1954, in: Leary, Perilous missions, pp.218-24), delivering supplies to the Thai National Police...
120 E-mail dated 2 June 2011, kindly sent to the author by Martin Best.
THAILAND-BURMA 1953-54: OPERATION REPAT

By late 1953, it had become quite clear that the Nationalist irregulars still resident in Burma who, since October 52, were commanded by General Liu Kuo-chuan, were more interested in controlling the drug trade in the Golden Triangle than in fighting against the Communists. To get rid of them, Burma had turned to the United Nations for help already in March 53, and eventually, CAT received the contract to carry these troops back to Taiwan. So 8 CAT C-46s were fitted with long-range tanks, and on 9 November 53, CAT Chief Pilot Robert E. Rousselot picked up the first group of evacuees at the airfield of Lampang in northern Thailand to fly them non-stop to Taipei. Three CAT C-46s were used each day, and the other two C-46s on that first day were piloted by Bill Welk and George Kelly. "The airlift was in full swing during November. Capt. Brongersma, the Flying Dutchman, has been flying the liaison plane back and forth between Chiengrai, Lampang, and Bangkok with W.H. Bird co-piloting on some of the trips. [...] The Captains who often flew the Repat planes are Porter, Welk, Johnson, Shaver and McGovern." Operation Repat continued until 8 December 53, carrying to Taiwan 1,925 troops and 335 dependents.

CAT’s REPAT flights from Lampang in Thailand to Taipei on 9, 20, and 30 November 53 (Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013)

In January 54, Anna Chennault reported: “After more than one month of hard work, superb flying and bad food, Civil Air Transport has evacuated nearly 2,500 Chinese guerrillas from Lampang, Thailand to Taipei, Taiwan. With chief pilot Bob Rousselot making the first take-off from the short dirt strip in Lampang on November 9, CAT pilots and crews had logged 138,600 miles of flying the 1,615 mile round trip by December 9. 3,294,600 passenger miles were flown with CAT’s perfect safety record unblemished. The final figures will be considerably higher, as the C-46 bucket seat specials kept right on shuttling as this story went to press. Of great international significance due to the United Nations sponsorship of this unique repatriation, the Lampang-Taipei airlift demonstrates anew that the rugged Commando has what it takes for safe operations under extremely bad conditions. Even CAT’s chief

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121 The contract between CAT and the United Nations was signed on 28 October 53 (Leary, Manuscript, p.259, in: UTD/Leary/B19F2).
125 Leary, Perilous missions, p. 196.
meteorologist, John Fogg, couldn’t keep his namesake, ‘ground fog’, from closing in the strip every morning at Lampang. But his efforts were so valuable in plotting winds aloft that thirty minutes flying time (estimate) was saved each way on the flights. All hands made a mighty effort, typical of CAT’s earned reputation. Director of Operations, Capt. Harry Cockrell, was on hand at Lampang at the start of the lift, as were R. J. Aubrey, liaison officer between CAT and the UN Committee, William Wu, flight operator in charge of radio equipment, J. R. Fuster, crew chief, and Capt. “Dutch” Brongersma, flying the DC-3 liaison plane that CAT had to charter to keep the mission going. Capts. Welk, Johnson, Wilson, McGovern, Hicks, Chiu, Watts, Forte, Richardson, Holden and Shaver were all included in the flights, returning to CAT’s commercial schedules on regular rotation. [...] The airlift has been supervised by representatives of the four nations Joint Committee (U. S., Free China, Thailand and Burma) and includes Col. Palmer of the U. S. Army, Col. E. Fu-de, Chinese delegate to the Committee from Burma, and Suen Pi-chi, Chinese Charge d’Affaires to Thailand. U. S. Ambassador to Thailand William Donovan and Chinese Military Attache Chung Wei-chen also were present when the first aircraft took off. The route from Lampang to Taipei took the CAT aircraft over mountains and jungle held by Ho Chi-min’s Communist forces. At the sea coast near Tourane, the route curved south to avoid Communist-held Hainan Island, then back to a direct heading for the Pescadores Islands off Taiwan, where the gradual let down to Taipei was started. Each plane is met by a welcoming committee of Chinese Government officials and celebrities of the entertainment world.”

CAT C-46s B-874 and B-858, probably after arrival at Taipei’s Sungshan Airport, where the repatriates receive DDT spraying from the quarantine officers
(with kind permission from Vincent Ma)

Former CAT pilot Connie Seigrist recalls: “Evidently the Taiwanese Health Department found Gen. Li’s troops infested with body lice, because upon our arrival in Taipei with any load of Gen. Li’s soldiers, we flight crews were given a delousing precaution with DDT powder sprayed on our heads, down our shirt fronts, and in our pants.”

127 Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p. 28, at: UTD/Leary/B21F11.
CAT C-46 B-842 was also used on the Repat airlift in 1953 (CAT Bulletin, vol. VII, no.1, January 54, pp.23 and 21)

Boarding the CAT planes at Lampang (above) and at arriving Taipei (below) (all photos from CAT Bulletin, vol. VI, no.12, December 1953, pp.4, 5, and 22)

As not all Chinese Nationalist irregulars had left the country, the evacuation was repeated between 14 February 54 and 20 March 54, and this time, 2,962 troops and 513 dependents were flown out of Chiang Rai (T-16) to Taipei, followed by another 696 soldiers and 192 dependents who crossed the Thai border in the following months and who were flown out by CAT charters. \(^{128}\) Sammy Yuan noted: “The Pat operation has resumed; this second phase of the operation is based at Chengrai instead of Lampang. When the point of uplifting the troops was decided to be Chengrai many people thought it was impossible. Well, up to now flights have been dispatched as planned without even a single delay! [...] Credit should be given to Bill Bird and Dutch Brongersma for their untiring efforts in taking liaison trips to up-country

\(^{128}\) Leary, Perilous missions, p. 196.
to coordinate the over-all operation of this evacuation. [...] Among the Captains who have been on the $PAT$ run were the veterans Porter, Wilson, Forte, Shaver, McGovern, Hicks, K. Chiu and Johnson; they were reinforced by Hayes, Davenport, Lampard, D. Smith, Richardson, Teeters and Seigrist."[129] Doc Johnson notes the following flights in his log book:

Two photos from the second operation $Repat$ ($CAT$ Bulletin, vol. VII, no.4, April 54, p.20)

Repatriates arriving at Taipei in February/March 54


CAT’s Operations Division gives a more detailed picture in its Monthly Report for February 54: “The second phase of Operation [RE]PAT was resumed on February 15, 1954, with the arrival of three aircraft, carrying approximately one hundred and fifty evacuees. The first aircraft was dispatched from Tainan on February 11 with radio equipment, spare parts, and mechanics. The staging area at pick up point was moved from Lampang to Chiengrai after it was found that the Chiengrai field was suitable for take-offs with full loads. The radio station was moved from Lampang to Chiengrai and was put into operation after overcoming considerable difficulties in obtaining proper clearance.”131 “On 24 February an unforecated move was performed to move CAT’s entire [RE]PAT Operation from Chiengrai to Lampang due to very sudden heavy rains in Chiengrai during the night of 23 February rendering the dirt runway unusable.”132 “Three planes returned to Bangkok after failing to land at Chiengrai in the early morning due to the strip being soggy after sudden rain during the night. The lack of adequate communications coordination prevented Bangkok being notified before the aircraft were dispatched. [...] We are operating our own radio station at Chiengrai but our contacts with Bangkok restrict our contacts with Bangkok to 3 times per day – the first being 0930L hours thus airfield data could not be passed to Bangkok until after aircraft had arrived Chiengrai.”133 “All necessary operations equipment and personnel were moved by truck from Chiengrai to Lampang and flight operations airlifting repatriates was resumed on February 25 after only one day interruption in schedule. On the night of 26 February, all CAT personnel and equipment was returned from Lampang to Chiengrai without interruption to repatriation airlift schedule as flights were dispatched on schedule from Chiengrai on 27 February.”134 “As of the last day of February, a total of eighteen flights airlifting approximately nine hundred and twelve soldiers was completed. It is anticipated the total number of evacuees will exceed three thousand. During the month an emergency procedure for Operation [RE]PAT was instituted which established rules and procedures to follow in the case of a [RE]PAT aircraft losing radio contact or being reported in a state of emergency, such as forced landing (ditching, etc.) or single engine, etc. It is believed this procedure will save valuable time and confusion in dispatching rescue in the event our aircraft encounters difficulties.”135 When the runways in the north were not usable for the heavy C-46s, CAT apparently chartered C-47s from local operators like Tradeastern of Bangkok (and probably also Trans-Asiatic Siam) to fly the troops down to Bangkok for takeover by the heavier C-46s of CAT. One such Tradeastern C-47 is known to have been VR-HET (msn 19895), flown for a total of 74.20 hours on local flights for CAT between January and 30 April 54.136

In May 1954, another 700 troops were repatriated by CAT in one week in May 1954 – but some 10,000 remained.137 Apparently, even after the last repatriation flight had landed at Taipei, this was still not the end of the story, as new Kuomintang irregulars seem to have been flown in and were supported from Taiwan: They created a new base near to the Mekong river and continued their role as opium barons, and it was not until 26 January 61 that their main base was overrun by 5,000 Burmese troops and three full divisions of the People’s Liberation Army of China.138

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136 E-mail dated 23 October 2012, sent by Ian D. Johnson to Martin Best who kindly forwarded it to the author.
138 Leary, Perilous missions, pp.195/6; Prados, Presidents’ secret wars, pp. 114/5.
covert support continued. American interest seemed to be confined to the occasional penetration of Yunnan by small groups for intelligence gathering purposes.”

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IV) FRENCH INDOCHINA: Missions for ECA and the French Military

Missions for STEM and ECA:

Already for the first part of November 50, CAT wanted to send one of its C-47s leased from Trans-Asiatic to Indochina. After Whiting Willauer had to cancel all C-47 operations on 17 October 50, because pilot Dudding had violated several safety regulations all of which had been reported to FEAF, this plan had to be postponed. On 22 December 50, HS-TAC, a C-47 chartered by CAT from Trans-Asiatic (Siam), was finally assigned to French Indochina, and five more chartered C-47s were projected to fly there for CAT at the end of December 50. Indeed, since early 1951, a CAT C-47, mostly flown by James B. McGovern, was permanently based at Saigon to transport supplies within Vietnam for the US Special Technical and Economic Mission (STEM), and during the early fifties, American military and economic assistance to Indochina even increased.

(CAT Bulletin, vol. IV, no.5, June 1951, p.21, and vol. IV, no.8, September 51, p.4)

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143 On 31 August 51, the CAT C-47 based at Saigon was B-811 (Memorandum dated 11 September 51 sent by the President to the Board of Directors, in: UTD/Leary/B20F9).
144 Leary, Perilous missions, pp.159 and 162.
The next aircraft to fly into Indochina was C-47 XT-809. Probably in early 1951, Felix Smith and Max Springweiler flew the former Saint Paul from Honk Kong to Hanoi and then on to Saigon. The cargo was mostly medicines that were to be distributed directly to the Vietnamese. Felix Smith recalls: “In the morning, Springweiler and I waited at Saigon’s airport for STEM’s medical supplies. [...] We flew an hour and a half northeast of Saigon’s flat delta, crossed three-thousand-foot mountains and touched down on Dalat’s plateau. It was a summer resort for those who could afford a vacation from Saigon’s heat. Our Vietnamese agent accepted the cargo. Perhaps this stuff will get to the people, I thought. He said, ‘Last night Vietminh kidnapped three headmen of villages nearby. Tied them to a stake and burned them alive.’ Springweiler said, ‘It doesn’t sound like a resort anymore.’ We flew over the coast, turned north, and saw bathers on Nha Trang’s long white beach and in the gentle cobalt surf. ‘The Riviera of the Orient’, Springweiler said. We stopped frequently to drop off medical supplies. [...] After reaching Haiphong – in the extreme north – we checked into the Metropole Hotel. [...] STEM’s medicines weren’t available for distribution for a couple of days, so a few officials of the American embassy utilized the Saint Paul for an overnight trip to Laos, and they asked us to fly via Cambodia so they could look upon Angkor. [...] We were soon over Thailand. [...] An hour and a half later we saw the characteristic bend in the Mekong that identified Vientiane, the commercial capital of Laos. We crossed the river and touched down on a red-clay strip that had been hacked out of the heavy foliage, and we taxied back through the red dust we had raised. A black limousine with an American flag on the fender waited. A lone American driver stood at its open doors. We opened our cabin door immediately so our diplomats could escape the hot airplane. [...] They drove off. It was dusk. Birds roosted. Bugs swarmed; it was malaria country. [...] In the morning we sprayed away the mosquitoes that had assembled in the airplane and took our VIPs back to Saigon. [...] The next day I was scheduled back to Taipei."

On 2 April 51, CAT pilot “Doc” Johnson ferried Trans-Asiatic (Siam) C-47 HS-TAC from Hong Kong to Bangkok and on 4 April on to Saigon. Between 5 April 51 and probably 11 May 51, HS-TAC was based at Saigon and flew for CAT throughout Vietnam – most of the time with “Doc” Johnson as Pilot in Command. It was also Johnson who ferried HS-TAC back to Hong Kong on 12 May 51. During this period, routes ran from Saigon to Vientiane and Luang Prabang in Laos, to Hue and Hanoi in Vietnam, to Nha Trang and Dalat, to Dong Hoi and Haiphong also in Vietnam, but on one occasion also to Bangkok. The customer is not mentioned, but it was probably still STEM (US Special Technical and Economic Mission) and so the cargo was probably medicine. The two flights from Saigon to Vientiane and on to Bangkok on 17 April 51 and from Bangkok to Vientiane and back to Saigon on 18 April 51, however, were possibly “black” support flights for the Thai National Police to their camp at Lop Buri/Kokothiem, as the route is rather unusual and as the flying time given is rather short for such a long route and also for support flights to Kuomintang General Li Mi.

(Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013)

145 Smith, China Pilot, pp.208-11.
“In the fall of 1951, CAT did obtain a contract to fly in support of the Economic Aid Mission in FIC [= French Indochina]. McGovern was assigned to this duty from September 1951 to April 1953. He flew a C-47 (B-813 in the beginning) throughout FIC: Saigon, Hanoi, Phnom Penh, Vientiane, Nhatrang, Haiphong, etc., averaging about 75 hours a month. This was almost entirely overt flying.”

He carried technicians and material to support projects in disease control, agriculture, forestry, fisheries, transportation, power, and public works, and sometimes took photos of “all areas of possible interest, including new landing sites”.

In late April 1953, “Doc” Johnson took over: On 19 April, he ferried C-47 B-811 to Hong Kong, and on 21 April, he proceeded to Saigon. Between 22 April 53 and 6 May 53, “Doc” Johnson flew C-47 B-811 out of Saigon to destinations mostly located inside French Indochina, going up to Hanoi in the north and to Vientiane, Luang Prabang and Seno in modern Laos. On 6 May 53, Johnson flew C-46 B-842 from Saigon to Hong Kong, but on 10 May, he came back to Saigon in C-46 B-138. All of these flights were officially chartered by the MSA (Mutual Security Agency), which had succeeded the ECA (Economic Cooperation Administration) in 1951.

Flights that CAT made for the MSA in Vietnam in April and May 1953

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147 Leary, Perilous missions, pp.162/63.
After CAT Captain “Doc” Johnson had come down to Saigon again on 10 May 53, he remained there for another couple of months, always flying C-47 B-811 and always flying the same type of routes for the ECA/MSA that he had already flown in April 1953. On 28 May 53, he ferried B-811 to Tainan for maintenance, but on 31 May, he took it back to Saigon, and this time, he and his B-811 remained there until 10 July 53. While the aircraft still remained at Saigon at the end, “Doc” Johnson returned to Hong Kong on 11 July.  

Officially, CAT’s Flights to French Indochina were operated for the ECA/MSA, and the cargo included all types of supplies. Since 1951, CAT also had one or two aircraft under charter to ICA (International Cooperation Administration) – the principal means of communications between ICA missions in Saigon, Phnom Penh, Vientiane, and Bangkok. Regularly scheduled flights were between these cities. One of the aircraft involved apparently was the Saigon-based C-47, the other one probably was a Bangkok-based aircraft. It can be assumed, however, that much of the supplies flown into Vietnam were also some sort of support to the French troops fighting against the Viet Minh. When the war in Indochina passed into history at Geneva in 1954, for eight years, the French forces had controlled only the ground on which they stood: “The Viet Minh used the classic tactics of the insurgent, moving at will across the terrain of Indochina and avoiding battle except on terms of its own choosing. Espousing nationalism, the Viet Minh won support from the peasantry, a source of manpower for carrying on the war. Sustained in the later years by weapons and materiel from Communist China, the Viet Minh confronted the French with a nearly impossible military situation.”

CAT C-47A B-811 probably taken in French Indochina in the early fifties  
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)

150 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 3.
In 1953, a new U.S. organization was created under the directorship of Harold Stassen, whose purpose was to centralize all governmental operations, as distinguished from policy formulation, that had as their purpose the cooperative development of economic and military strength among the nations of the free world: the United States Foreign Operations Administration (FOA).\textsuperscript{151} It was “established by Reorganization Plan No. 7 of 1953, effective August 1, 1953, to centralize operations, control, and direction of all foreign economic and technical assistance programs and to coordinate mutual security activities. [So, FOA] inherited the functions of MSA, Technical Cooperation Administration, Institute of Inter-American Affairs, and other foreign assistance operations. [FOA] furnished military, economic, and technical assistance to friendly nations.”\textsuperscript{152} As it seems, there was still a second CAT C-47 flying in Vietnam in the fall of 1953, as C-47 B-817, which was still painted olive drab from Operation Tropic at that time, had a landing accident at Saigon on 23 October 53.\textsuperscript{153}

\begin{figure}
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\includegraphics[width=0.8\textwidth]{cat_c-47_b-817_accident_at_saigon_on_23_october_53_utd_kirkpatrick_b34_a_and_utd_kirkpatrick_b9_b}
\caption{CAT C-47 B-817 Accident at Saigon on 23 October 53 (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B34 [a] and UTD/Kirkpatrick/B9 [b])}
\end{figure}

\textsuperscript{151} See [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Foreign_Operations_Administration](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/United_States_Foreign_Operations_Administration). FOA was abolished by Executive Order 10610 on 9 May 1955. Its functions were split and transferred to the United States Department of State and the United States Department of Defense, with functions going to the International Cooperation Administration (ib.).

\textsuperscript{152} Quoted from [http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/469.html#469.6](http://www.archives.gov/research/guide-fed-records/groups/469.html#469.6).

\textsuperscript{153} Date and place of the accident according to the photo caption in UTD/Kirkpatrick/B34.
In December 1953, the Foreign Operations Administration established a schedule for CAT operations in Vietnam, and this schedule had worked out fairly well in January 1954. The CAT C-47 operating in Vietnam at that time was B-811, but it had been “requested that a portable or removable gallery or buffet be installed in the aircraft sent to replace B-811. A good many passengers are now [i.e. in January 54] being carried, and it will enable the Flight Steward to prepare a more attractive tea service for the passengers. It is also suggested that some sort of removable ashtrays be installed in the cabin for the use of the passengers. It will help to keep the cabin cleaner.”\(^{154}\) Indeed, in January 54, the CAT C-47 operated for FOA in Vietnam (B-811) was flown for a total of 101 hours.\(^{155}\)

CAT C-47 B-811 at Saigon in the early 1950ies
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29, photo no. 1-ECK29-1 PB901)

“An extra flight crew as well as an additional mechanic and night lighting facilities arrived from Tainan on B-811 on the 11\(^{th}\) of February. This increase in flight crew, mechanic and equipment was necessary to meet the anticipated heavy flying demand from the Foreign Operations Administration. It is believed the flight time for March will be approximately 125 hours. During the month, B-811 had an engine failure and it was necessary to transport the replacement engine via a PAT [= REPAT] aircraft, which was held and used to meet flight requirements, while B-811 was out of commission. It was quite urgent to have this replacement aircraft, as Mr. Harold E. Stassen, Head of FOA, arrived during this period. The C-46 met the flight requirements of B-811 without incident.”\(^{156}\) The FOA C-47 B-811 arrived at Tainan on 7 February 54 for No.3 service and returned on 10 February.\(^{157}\) In February 54, the CAT C-47 operated for FOA in Vietnam was flown for a total of 67 hours and the C-46 for 7 hours.\(^{158}\) In March 54, CAT C-47 B-815 replaced B-811 as the FOA aircraft for operations in Vietnam.\(^{159}\)

\(^{156}\) CAT’s Operations Division, Monthly Report for February 54, p. 8, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1.
\(^{159}\) CAT’s Operations Division, Monthly Report for February 54, p. 12, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1; in February 54, B-815 had undergone no.3 service and was repainted for use as a replacement for B-811 (Aircraft Data Report, February 54, in: UTD/Leary/B22F10).
“Throughout the war years, French forces occupied several enclaves. A chain of defensive positions guarded the Red River flatlands in the north, including the cities of Hanoi and Haiphong, the Bac Mai and Gia Lam airfields at Hanoi, and the Cat Bi and Do Son fields outside Haiphong. A second major French concentration lay around Saigon and included the Tan Son Nhut and Bien Hoa airfields. French forces also garrisoned perimeters about lesser centers at Tourane (later called Da Nang), and Nha Trang. Overland movement outside these enclaves invited ambush by day and was suicidal at night. Based inside these protected areas were the French air transport squadrons, primarily at Tan Son Nhut, Do Son, and Nha Trang. In the less populated highlands of Vietnam and over much of Laos, the French garrisoned numerous camps and posts. […] Few of the isolated posts had landing strips, so that airdrop became the customary delivery method. Over seventy drop zones in the interior were in routine use by 1953. […] Another means of challenging the Viet Minh in the interior was the Base Aéro-Terrestre, situated in a remote area and built around a heavy-duty airstrip. Air supply entirely eliminated the need for ground lines of communication. French troop units could stage from the airhead, making patrols of several days duration. Should enemy forces concentrate to besiege the airstrip, they became vulnerable to air strikes.”

From the beginning, the French Air Force had 2 problems in Indochina: a constant lack of aircrews and a weak system of aircraft maintenance and supply. “In transport units, available aircraft sometimes exceeded aircrews. In December 1953, for example, the French had fifty-eight crews for sixty-nine C-47s, having acquired some twenty additional aircraft the previous
USAF maintenance and supply teams arrived in Vietnam in late 1952 and sought to improve the French Air Force logistics. “Military transports were sometimes augmented by civilian craft flown by civilian pilots, many of them veterans of the difficult weather and terrain of Southeast Asia. Civilian transports also flew into battle areas, and on occasions dropped paratroops.”

So it is not surprising that in 1953 and 1954, i.e. during operations Squaw and Squaw II, CAT’s Saigon-based C-47 – first B-811, then B-815 – quite often visited the C-119 operation in the north, apparently bringing in supplies. Reportedly, CAT was also chartered for maquis supply drops in Laos and missions into the Democratic Republic of Vietnam in late 1954, using not only their own C-47, but reportedly also a Dragon Rapide and a Norseman for drops to Groupement Mixte d’Intervention (GMI) maquis at that time.

On 5 February 57, “Doc” Johnson was again sent down to Saigon, and this time he flew CAT’s C-47 B-817 on the usual routes until 12 February. On 13 February 57, he ferried this aircraft back to Tainan.

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162 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp. 7/8.
163 Conboy/Morrison, Shadow war, p.15 and p.27, note 14. If such aircraft really flew for CAT, they were apparently chartered from companies like Veka Akat, Cie Autrex or Compagnie Laotienne de Commerce et de Transport, who owned Dragon Rapides and Norsemen in the mid-fifties (see Burnett/Slack/Davis, South-East Asia civil aircraft registers, pp.231 and 242-44).
164 Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013.
Operation Squaw

Even more demanding however were the clandestine operations. When the French asked for assistance against the Viet Minh in early 1953, the situation was as follows: “The Far East Air Forces C-119 fleet in 1953 consisted of approximately 103 craft, all assigned to the 483d Troop Carrier Wing at Ashiya Air Base, Japan, commanded by Col. Maurice F. Casey.”165 “While the Pentagon deliberated the French requests for support, Secretary of State John Foster Dulles was returning from a NATO meeting in Paris. During the meeting, the French were anxious about the situation in Laos and wanted to borrow C-119s to transport tanks and heavy equipment. [...] Upon his return, Dulles discussed the matter with President Eisenhower, noting that the option to send American forces into French Indochina ‘was a decision which would have many repercussions and would raise many problems.’ But there was a solution to the problem; perhaps the US could use American civilian pilots to fly the C-119s, and avoid any unpleasantness. The day prior, Secretary Dulles had checked with his brother Allen, the new Director of Central Intelligence (DCI), about the feasibility of using the Agency’s Civil Air Transport (CAT) pilots based out of Taiwan to fly the C-119s. DCI Dulles contacted CAT’s president in Hong Kong, Alfred T. Cox, who replied with a prompt ‘can do’. [...] The French accepted the offer, and in the last week of April, the Pentagon directed the loan of six C-119s to be piloted by CAT civilians to French forces in Vietnam.”166 “Pilot checkouts began promptly at Clark. Crews from the 483d Wing gave ground and flight instruction to crewmen from the French Air Force and to a group of civilian pilots recruited in the Far East under contract to a private airline, Civil Air Transport, Inc.”167

So CAT pilots Felix Smith, E. P. Bable, H. W. Wells, E. G. Kane, Steve Kusak, and N. N. Forte received word in Tokyo on 1 May 53 to depart immediately for Taipei. Leaving Tokyo at 0930 local time, they arrived at Taipei in the evening. At Taipei they were joined by Bill Welk, George Kelly, Assistant Chief Pilot Paul Holden, Pinky Pinkava, M. Shaver, and E. F. Sims. After briefing on the mission, the 12 pilots and co-pilots departed for Clark AFB, together with Gordon Nelson as CAT liaison and George Stubbs and J. P. Gotham for maintenance. At Clark, the CAT pilots were checked out by the 483rd TCW in 3 days of night and day flying and concentrated ground school. The CAT group, together with 18 mechanics in civilian clothes from the 483rd TCW departed Clark in the early morning of 5 May 53 for Nha Trang, FIC. Here they learned that due to the rain, most airfields were unusable for C-119s and that they had to fly airdrop missions.168 On 6 May 53, the CAT pilots flew north and, with French Air Force navigators and flight engineers, began air drops to French garrisons out of Gia Lam air base, just east of Hanoi in Operation Squaw or Project Swivel Chair, as the USAF called it.169 “The American aircrews remained at Hanoi flying about eighty missions during the three months of Project Swivel Chair. The French and the Civil Air Transport crews flew all operational missions.”170

The aircraft were based at Gia Lam air base, just east of Hanoi, and were used to make airdrops (supplies and ammunition) to French troops surrounded by Communist forces in the Plain of Jars in Laos and to isolated French posts in northwestern Tonkin. CAT pilot Felix Smith recalls: “So-called aerial delivery from our C-46s required many passes, but the C-119

165 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp. 9.
166 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp. 29/30.
167 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp. 9/10.
168 Learcy, Manuscript, p.149, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
170 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 10.
dropped its entire loads – seven tons – in one swoop, and the corncob engines zoomed the empty airplane away from ground fire. [...] When we got over the white cloth T that marked the drop zone, I rang the bell and then heard the rattle of chains and rushing swoosh of air. The plane leaped up as if weightless. Obviously, our heavy cargo, chained to parachutes, had been released by the French Air Force ‘kickers’ in back. We added maximum power, pulled the nose up, circled back, and watched parachutes of various colors settle around the cloth T.”

CAT pilots who flew Squaw I missions and Squaw I C-119 “543”
(in: CAT Bulletin, vol. VI, no. 8, August 53, p.20)

The aircraft flown by the CAT crews were six Fairchild C-119s belonging to the USAF. Three of them were loaned to the French Air Force from the 483rd Troop Carrier Wing based at Ashiya who ran the support operations in Vietnam and three from the 314th Troop Carrier Wing. The 483rd Troop Carrier Wing, Medium was activated on 1 January 53 absorbing assets of the inactivated 403rd Troop Carrier Wing. Between April 1953 and September 1954 the wing aided the French Air Force in Indochina by training air-crews, evacuating wounded, and maintaining aircraft. It was based at Ashiya, Japan, between 1 January 53 and 25 June 60, flying C-119s between 1951 and 1959. Between 1 January 53 and 25 June 60, it included the 815th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Flying Jennies”, which used C-119s from 1953 to 1959; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/815th_Airlift_Squadron), the C-119s of the 816th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Packet Rats”, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/816th_Expeditionary_Airlift_Squadron), and the C-119s of the 817th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Blue Tail Flies”; see http://www.koreanwar.org/html/units/usaf/817tcs.htm

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171 Smith, China Pilot, pp.222-23.
172 The 483rd Troop Carrier Wing, Medium was activated on 1 January 53 absorbing assets of the inactivated 403rd Troop Carrier Wing. Between April 1953 and September 1954 the wing aided the French Air Force in Indochina by training air-crews, evacuating wounded, and maintaining aircraft. It was based at Ashiya, Japan, between 1 January 53 and 25 June 60, flying C-119s between 1951 and 1959. Between 1 January 53 and 25 June 60, it included the 815th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Flying Jennies”, which used C-119s from 1953 to 1959; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/815th_Airlift_Squadron), the C-119s of the 816th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Packet Rats”, see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/816th_Expeditionary_Airlift_Squadron), and the C-119s of the 817th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Blue Tail Flies”; see http://www.koreanwar.org/html/units/usaf/817tcs.htm

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Carrier Wing also at Ashiya, Japan, whose C-119 units were attached to the 483rd Troop Carrier Wing between 1 January 53 and 15 November 54. These 6 C-119s had been prepared at Clark AFB, Philippines and were delivered to Hanoi on 3 May 1953 in French Air Force markings by French crews, arriving at Gia Lam air base on 4 May. For the USAF, these 6 C-119s were Project Honshu, for the French Armée de l’Air they were Détachment C-119. In his article entitled “The Fairchild C-119 Boxcar – Part 2”, Colin Smith identifies these 6 C-119s from USAF records:

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Sometimes, unforeseen things happened: “We called our early morning-sorties to Xeng Quong on the Plain of Jars the Dawn Patrol. Although five Boxcars had been scheduled to depart Hanoi at daybreak, French Air Force operations didn’t have a weather report. [...] ‘It’s probably still fogged in’, someone said. ‘If all five of us go it could be five round trips of fuel wasted.’ ‘I’ll go and send you guys a report’, I said. The green mountains of North Vietnam and Laos looked peaceful in the early morning calm, and patches of ground fog decorated rice-paddy valleys. Three hours later, in bright morning sunshine I looked down at a thick blanket of fog and the strong radio beacon told me Xeng Quong was underneath. It was obvious it’d be hours before the sun burned it off. I carried my load of supplies back to Hanoi. “We flew the stuff to Xeng Quong early that afternoon. It was our last landing for a week. Instead, we dropped heavy stuff on battle areas. French ground crews had removed the


173 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp. 3-23.

174 The unit of interest here is the 314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium, which had been founded as the 314th Transport Group on 28 January 42 and was re-designated on 19 November 48. It was based at Ashiya, Japan, between 7 September 50 and 15 November 54 and flew C-119s between 1950 and 1957. The USAF aircraft records give these aircraft as belonging to the 314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium was assigned to the 314th Troop Carrier Wing between 1 November 48 and 8 October 57, although the 314th TCG Medium was attached to the 483rd Troop Carrier Wing from 1 January 53 to 15 November 54 (see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/314th_Troop_Carrier_Group](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/314th_Troop_Carrier_Group)). The unit included the 50th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Red Devils”; see [http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/50th_Airlift_Squadron](http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/50th_Airlift_Squadron)), the 61st Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Green Hornets”; see [http://61tcs.org/61tcs.org/products.htm](http://61tcs.org/61tcs.org/products.htm)), and the 62nd Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Blue Barons”; see [http://wwwsafbtn.org/62nd_tcs_s.htm](http://wwwsafbtn.org/62nd_tcs_s.htm)), all of which flew C-119s in the fifties.

175 Apparently, even the USAF squadron markings were painted over.


179 See the Discovery Channel’s video tape Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu, where CAT C-119 “537” is depicted at 39 minutes, 57 seconds.

180 See the Discovery Channel’s video tape Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu, where CAT C-119 “541” is depicted at 16 minutes, 47 seconds.

clamshell doors. Although the entire back end was open, we couldn’t see daylight. It was blocked by stacked palettes of ammunition and food or by a huge artillery piece. But when the kickers released the parachutes, the load disappeared in an instant and light flooded the empty fuselage. [...] I made a few quick mental calculations: six hours to the Xeng Quong and back, multiplied by the pounds per hour of fuel flow while sucking the air in back, ‘thuba, thuba’. ‘I’ll need more fuel’, I said. ‘You have plenty’, a ground crewman said. ‘Takes more with the doors off.’ ‘That’s all you get.’ ‘I’ll be in the café. Let me know when I got it.’

“Sipping bitter coffee, nibbling a croissant, I felt like an orphan because the other guys were flying out. Half an hour later the enlisted man came in to sneer, ‘All right, we got a Smith fuel load.’ We took off and thub-thubbed all the way to Xeng Quong, landed, unloaded a field gun, and returned to Hanoi. The tarmac was empty. ‘Where are the other guys? Did they get off in their second trip so fast?’ ‘They’re sitting in Xeng Quong. Not enough fuel to get back. Three, anyway. The fourth is inbound.’ [...] He land safely with almost nothing but fumes in his fuel tanks. The next day’s sorties halted while we flew fifty-five-gallon-drums of gasoline to the stranded guys. Everyone, including me, acted as if the incident hadn’t happened.”

For six weeks, CAT pilots flew those vitally needed drop missions until they were relieved by French Air Force crews who had been checked out during that period. In early June 53, the operation shifted to Cat Bi airfield, “because of runway deterioration at Gia Lam. A second group of French pilots received C-119 training with U.S. Air Force units in Europe and replaced the civilian pilots in late June.” Operation Squaw continued until 16 July 53, at the end landing cargo instead of making airdrops and using French pilots. On 16 July 53, the aircraft returned to Clark, the last one arriving there on 3 August 53. During Operation Squaw, the six C-119s logged 517 combat flying hours, made 176 sorties and carried 88 short tons.

French Indochina between CAT’s Operations Squaw and Squaw II

However, this was not the end of US help for the French. “Through an agreement negotiated by the U.S. mission in Saigon with Gen. Henri E. Navarre, the new French Commander in Indochina, the C-119s and the 483d Wing’s personnel left Indochina on July 28, 1953. Also by agreement, the Far East Forces maintained six C-119s on ten-hour alert, ready if needed for heavy drops in Indochina. French crews, further, were to receive periodic C-119 refresher flights.” Later, plans were made to hold available even 22 C-119s for short term loan in order to increase the French paratroop assault capabilities. “Training French Air Force aircrews in the C-119 was resumed at Clark on September 23, with 483d Wing aircraft, instructors, and maintenance personnel. The goal was the capability to operate in Indochina with twenty-two aircraft. Civil Air Transport crewmen, meanwhile, received additional training at Ashiya.”

After the end of the Korean War in late July 53, the Chinese turned all their efforts into supporting the Viet Minh, so that, in late 1953, the French asked for help again, this time to

182 Smith, China Pilot, pp. 224-25.
183 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 10.
186 Leary, Manuscript, p.151, in: UTD/Leary/B19F1.
187 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 10.
188 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 11.
support the French garrison at Dien Bien Phu in northern Vietnam close to the Laotian border. “General Navarre’s decision to establish a Base Aero-Terrestre at Dien Bien Phu was rooted in Viet Minh threats against Laos. From the airhead, Navarre reasoned, French units could interdict communist forces in Laos and, should the Viet Minh decide to concentrate against the airhead, a setpiece battle would develop wherein French air and artillery firepower could be decisive. Accordingly on the morning of November 20, 1953, two paratroop battalions jumped from sixty French Air Force C-47s and seized the valley of Dien Bien Phu. Viet Minh troops fled or were quickly overcome, and a second wave of troopers jumped unopposed in the afternoon” – the beginning of operation CASTOR. Already on 14 November 1953, the French Air Force had received 5 C-119s on loan from the USAF intended to be used for initial and refresher training for French pilots who were qualified in both the C-47 and the C-119. The 5 aircraft were based at Cat Bi airfield, as the USAF wanted to and eventually succeeded in having 22 French Air Force crews trained in the C-119. But although the C-119s were rarely used on drop missions into combat zones in the beginning, they were an indispensable part of the initial assault on Dien Bien Phu: “Bulldozers were needed to fill the nearly 1,200 holes in the existing dirt runway, as it had been sabotaged by the Viêtminh, and the C-119 was the only transport able to airdrop such a load. On the second day of CASTOR, two packets appeared over the valley; the first, piloted by Captain Soulat, carried a bulldozer, while the second, piloted by Captain Magnat, carried the blade. Soulat released his payload over the DZ, but the shock of the seven-ton bulldozer against the 9,000 square feet of canopy snapped the parachute attachment coupling, and one of the largest pieces of equipment ever dropped from an airplane buried itself 10 feet into the soft earth of the drop zone. Two days later, on 23 November, Soulat repeated ‘Operation Bulldozer’, this time successfully, and the runway was ready for traffic by the morning of the 25th.”

A photo inserted in an article by Pierre Guin, who was responsible for supplying the French garrisons in Northern Vietnam at that time, seems to mean that the 4 C-119s shown in it standing at Cat Bi airfield were part of those original C-119s loaned to the French Air Force in November 53. They are: “116”, “572”, “537”, and “144”. Meanwhile, other French crews completed training in heavy drops at Cat Bi and at Clark and made four drops at Dien Bien Phu on December 3.

Then the French request for more support became formal, and in Project Ironage I, 15 USAF C-119s of the 483rd TCW that had been painted in the colors of the French Air Force at Clark Air Base arrived at Cat Bi airfield south of Haiphong on 5 December 53. General Navarre had requested these 15 C-119s for the stated purpose of dropping 1,070 tons of materiel (mainly barbed wire and ammunition) at Dien Bien Phu to be flown by French aircrews. “The transfer went smoothly, and by 1730, twelve planes were at the disposal of the FAF. Under the original Ironage provisions, planes were only on-loan for a five-day period, but in light of the operationally critical situation at Diên Biên Phu, the initial deployment was stretched to fifteen days.”

The American detachment was asked to provide twelve ships each day. The planes rotated to Ashiya for inspections and major repairs, returning to Cat Bi carrying spare parts, replacement crewmen, or parachutes. So, between 7 and 21

189 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 11.
190 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp. 59/60.
193 Their identities are: “116” (49-116 msn 10353), “572” (51-2572 msn 10530), “537” (51-2537 msn 10495), and “144” (49-144 msn 10381).
194 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p.16.
195 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.67.
196 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p.16.
December 1953, 12 USAF C-119s made available to the French Air Force and flown by French crews in Project Ironage I delivered 1,084 tons of equipment (barbed wire, tent stakes, and 105mm howitzer ammunition) in support of Dien Bien Phu – a total of 187 missions and 600 flight hours.197

The following day, i.e. on 22 December 53, Ironage II began, ending on 8 January 54. On 26 December, Colonel Christian de Castries, commander of the camp at Dien Bien Phu, directed that all of his positions be fortified to resist artillery shells of 105mm. This should have meant an enormous amount of engineering supplies in addition to the daily drops of food and ammunition, but was considered to be impossible and hence rejected. Then the French wanted to use C-119s as “napalm bombers”, but this request was initially turned down by Washington – the approval arrived only much later, on 22 March 54. In Ironage II, 12 C-119s flew a total of 156 sorties, dropping 936 tons and using 492 flying hours.198 It was immediately followed by Ironage III, which lasted from 9 to 16 January 54: In this operation, 18 C-119s dropped 894 tons of supplies by an average of almost 20 sorties a day – although, as early as 10 January 54, the C-119s were shot at by Vietnamese 37mm antiaircraft artillery.199 From 17 to 31 January 54, project Ironage IV was to use the 18 C-119s that had been loaned from the 483rd TCW. “But the mission could have been accomplished with half that number of airplanes. The limiting factor had again been the lack of available C-119 pilots. The French Air Force admitted this deficiency and surrendered six of the aircraft back to Ashiya, where the planes were needed for busy day-to-day FEAF airlift operations. Thus, Ironage IV began with only twelve aircraft and went for nearly two weeks, dropping an average of eighty tons per day as Dien Bien Phu prepared for battle.”200 During that time, many of the French aircrews were used to support General Navarre’s Operation Atlante in the area of Danang and Nha Trang in coastal Annam, but on 31 January 54, Dien Bien Phu was shelled for the first time.201 Nevertheless, Project Ironage V started on 1 February 54 with only 4 French crews who were to fly the 12 C-119s made available to Captain Soulat, head of the French C-119 detachment. The same night, Viet Minh guerrillas attacked Don Son airfield near Hanoi destroying at least 2 C-47s and damaging several other aircraft. Project Ironage V ended on 12 March 54, and during that time, the C-119s – at the end all of the 12 aircraft – dropped barbed wire and stakes near Luang Prabang and delivered barbed wire and ammunition to Dien Bien Phu.202

C-119 flight line at Cat Bi on 27 April 54
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/ color slide no. 1KP-B2-SC247)

197 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.68, note 48.
198 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp.69-72.
199 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp.72-74.
200 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.74.
201 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp.74-76.
202 “CAT in French Indochina”, pp.11/12, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.77.
Operation Squaw II

So the real problem was not the lack of aircraft, but the lack of aircrews to fly all the C-119s made available to the French Air Force. As it seems, this problem was clearer to the US Government than it was to the French Air Force. For CAT’s Monthly Report for January 54 lists 33 hours of C-46 flying and 22 hours of C-47 flying for an operation called Concubine and 7 hours of C-46 flying for an operation called Midwife.203 The exact meaning of Concubine and Midwife is not known, but the names suggest a connection with Operation Squaw – so probably Concubine stands for the transportation of 21 CAT pilots to Ashiya Air Base, Japan, for refresher training in the C-119 in January 54204 and also for other preparations of further missions in Vietnam that CAT and the US Government expected – perhaps the C-46 flights that carried supplies to Vietnam to be distributed there by CAT’s FOA C-47 in early 1954.205 The 7 C-46 hours flown for Midwife apparently were the 7 hours when a CAT C-46 replaced C-47 B-811 in Vietnam operations.206

However, CAT did not receive any request for supplemental pilots in January and February 54, but E.C. Kirkpatrick was transferred to Saigon in February 54 as the coordinator to do all the preparatory work for such an operation.207 At the end, the French turned to CAT again. As a result, on 3 March 54, the Commander-in-chief of the French Military in Indochina and CAT Inc, represented by James R. Kelly, CAT’s man in Saigon, signed a contract stating that effective 9 March 54, CAT Inc. agreed to place at the disposal of the French forces 12 First Pilots, 12 Co-Pilots, 1 Crew Chief, and 1 Operations specialist for the purpose of servicing 12 C-119s to be loaned and maintained by the USAF and to be flown in French Air Force colors: Operation Squaw II. In this contract, the French agreed to pay CAT $70 per flying hour “with a minimum monthly guarantee of sixty hours” (Article 5). As to the nature of these flights, Article 2 of the contract states that “all missions [are] of a logistical support nature which might be required, exclusive of any combat mission. Bombardment or dropping of napalm will never be required.” Article 3 adds that these “air transport or air-drop missions will be ordered by the local representative of the Far East Air Command in charge of air transport for the Armed Forces”, and Article 9 of the contract repeats that these were “Transport flights – Type of cargo. Crews will accept, within the load limits for C-119 aircraft, cargo as prescribed regardless of its nature.”208 So on 9 March 1954, a first contingent of CAT pilots arrived at Haiphong, and a truck was needed to transport their bags, trunks, cases of food, and a large refrigerator to the Majestic Hotel in downtown Haiphong.209

204 “During January [1954], 22:35 hours non-revenue time was flown on the C-47 in support of the C-119 training program. This was the total time as a result of three (3) round trips to Ashiya. No action has been, or will be, taken to charge this flying to any specific project unless specifically advised to do so” (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for January 54, p.2, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7). Among the pilots trained at Ashiya was “Doc” Johnson who flew C-119s “545”, “537”, and “532” on 17 and 18 January 54 (Page from “Doc” Johnson’s log book kindly supplied by his son James on 14 February 2013).
205 Plating, Failure in the margins: Aerial resupply at Dien Bien Phu, p.71.
The first contingent of CAT pilots and ground personnel for *Squaw II* included (left to right): 

**front row**: Milan, N. Hicks, Watts, Sailer, Shilling, and Forte  
**back row**: Pinkava, Judkins, Clough, H. Hicks, Hughes, Shaver, Marsh, and Kirkpatrick

Fitzhugh talks to Major Yarborough inside “571”; Monson Shaver at the controls of “581”  

All *Squaw II* photos taken at Cat Bi airport, Haiphong in April 1954  

(*CAT Bulletin*, vol. VII, no. 4, April 54, pp. 14, and 5)  

On 10 March 54, the CAT crews moved to their operations building at Cat Bi airfield, shared with the French Air Force crews. Maps were studied and communication procedures – complicated by the language barrier – were reviewed. Local familiarization flights were scheduled for the following day, but had to be cancelled due to poor weather.²¹⁰

²¹⁰ Plating, *Failure in the Margins*, p. 79.
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Dien Bien Phu Main OZ fell the Evening of 7 May 1954
And Isabel OZ (South) fell Early Morning of 8 May 1954
(No Govern & Buford were killed late afternoon 6 May)

Operation Squaw II: CAT personnel, roster as of 8 July 54
(http://libtreasures.utdallas.edu/xmlui/bitstream/handle/10735.1/1122/squaw roster.pdf?sequen ce=1)
Dien Bien Phu was not a single fortress, but a series of strongpoints. In the center, there were 4 positions called Huguette, Dominique, Éliane, and Claudine, of which strongpoint Huguette was also responsible for protecting the main airstrip located east of Huguette. To the northwest, north, and northeast, there were 3 satellite positions – Anne Marie, Gabrielle, and Béatrice –, each housing a single battalion. Seven kilometers to the south was strongpoint Isabelle, with 2 infantry battalions, whose purpose was to cover the main position with artillery fire and house an additional counterattacking force. Between 1 February and 12 March 54, Dien Bien Phu’s dirt airstrip, which was officially known as “Air Base 195”, was hit by enemy artillery eight times, and each time, combat engineers had to repair it. This strip was the home of the French aircraft dedicated to protect the base, while the transport fleet responsible for providing logistical support was stationed around Hanoi and Haiphong. On 20 November 53, the number of French Air Force C-47s available to Colonel Jean Nicot, commander of the French Air Transport Command, had been 71, and on 13 March 54, it was approximately the same number. The number of C-119s available to Colonel Nicot was

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211 Plating, *Failure in the Margins*, pp.80-83.
212 Plating, *Failure in the Margins*, p.34.
twelve on 13 March 54, and they were flown by French Air Force crews as well as by the newly arrived CAT crews. Four more C-119s were added on 18 March 54, and later in April 54, the number of C-119s grew to twenty-nine. It should be added that an 8-man US Army detachment from Ashiya prepared parachutes and loaded aircraft at Cat Bi, and that a maintenance detachment from the 483rd TCW – 121 men in April 54 – “kept the Cat Bi planes in good flying condition, aided by the aircraft rotation system and ample supplies of spare parts.” Furthermore, “in mid-April, the 816th Troop Carrier Squadron of the 483d Wing moved to Clark with fifteen C-119s, tasked to make six round trips daily to Indochina.”

On 12 March 54, the CAT crews began to fly airdrop missions. On 12 March, the valley of Dien Bien Phu still “seemed idyllic, with the exception of the burning wreckage of a C-119 that had landed the day prior due to an engine malfunction and been summarily shelled by the Viêtminh” – the first loss of a C-119. On 13 March 54, heavy fighting began around the garrison; this was the beginning of the battle of Dien Bien Phu. This attack shut down the landing strip at Dien Bien Phu. The details are described by Plating: “At 0830 on 13 March, a Curtiss C-46 ‘Commando’ flown by Aigle Azur Maroc Airlines was preparing for takeoff at Dien Bien Phu when it came under fire from Viêtminh artillery and was shot to pieces. Intelligence intercepts warned the French of a Viêtminh offensive planned for that evening; the attack was planned as an artillery barrage followed by an infantry assault on Beatrice, launched from trenches dug near the position’s edge. At noon, Legionnaires on Beatrice discovered the Viêtminh approach trenches only two hundred yards away. [...] Shortly thereafter the runway was again targeted and two Dakotas from Transport Group 1/64 Béarn were destroyed on the ground. [...] The fighter-bombers, stationed at Dien Bien Phu to suppress enemy artillery, were effectively neutralized as seven Bearcats would be...

213 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp.83/4; the number of C-119s is recorded in the official unit histories of the 315th Airlift Division (Combat Cargo) and the 483rd TCW (Plating, p.84, note 8). In April 54, CAT’s Monthly Report from Tachikawa (in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7) notes that “two squadrons of C-119 aircraft from West Japan are now stationed temporarily in the Philippines which is also rumored may become a permanent move”.
214 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp.16 and 17 (quotation).
217 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.79. On p.93, note 30, Plating confirms the date: “a C-119 destroyed the night of 11 March after landing with engine trouble. […] USAF Major Thomas E. Yarbrough flew to Dien Bien Phu […] on the afternoon of the 11th to rescue the C-119. When the airfield came under fire that night, de Castries reportedly impressed the FAF crew, stating that ‘he needed all the men he could get,’ leaving Yarbrough on his own. After the Packet was destroyed that evening, Yarbrough took the C-47 […] and flew solo back to Haiphong.” According to the USAF aircraft records, C-119 51-2546 of the 314th TCW was “terminated” on 9 March 54 (Smith, “The Fairchild C-119 Boxcar – Part 2”, p.76). This was probably the C-119 lost on the ground at Dien Bien Phu on 11 March, handed over to the French Air Force on 9 March, and at the same time definitely transferred to them, so that its loss would be that of a French and not of an American aircraft.
219 This was Aigle Azur Maroc C-46E F-DAAR (msn 2943); see Aviation Safety Network at http://aviation-safety.net/database/record.php?id=19540313-0.
220 One of them seems to have been C-47B “349931”/FRBWD of GT1/64 Béarn, i.e. msn 15747/27192; the second C-47 probably was one of the following 3 French Air Force C-47s all reported to have been destroyed on 13 March 1954: “476357”/FRAZB of GT2/62 (msn 15941/32689) destroyed at an unknown location; “49949”/FRAYC of GT2/62 (msn 15765/27210), also destroyed at an unknown location; and “349656”/FRAMG of GT1/61 (msn 15481/26926) destroyed at an unknown location (see Gradidge, The Douglas DC-1/DC-2/DC, vol. II, under the msn of these aircraft). The C-47s of GT1/64 Béarn were based at Nha Trang, the C-47s of GT2/62, Franche Comté were based at Haiphong and Hanoi (Gradidge, vol. I, p. 56). The other two French Air Force C-47s destroyed were among the aircraft shot down over Dien Bien Phu on 24, 25, 26, and 27 March and on 31 March 54 (“CAT in French Indochina”, pp.16/7, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1; Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.103).
destroyed on the ground in the next twenty-four hours, with the other four narrowly escaping to Hanoi and Vientiane. With the airfield in severe disrepair following the noontime barrage, base air traffic control broadcast a ‘GQO’ message at 1600, effectively closing the airfield to the outside world."

So, from now on, Dien Bien Phu had to be supplied by airdrops. In order to be able to survive, the French garrison there required 170 tons of ammunition and 30 tons of food a day. With the outbreak of hostilities, the CAT pilots went on strike, asking for better deflagration, as they considered this type of flying a violation of their contract; but on 15 March, they returned to service. On 14 March 54, the radio beacon was destroyed, and on 15 March, strongpoint Gabrielle was lost, the second after the loss of Béatrice on 14 March. On 16 March, Dien Bien Phu established priorities for the drops: 1) personnel, 2) a new VHF beacon, 3 medical supplies for the main drop zone, plus 4) dismantled artillery pieces and ammunition for DZ Octavie, but on 17 March 54, bad weather kept the airdrops to a minimum. Sometimes, CAT-piloted C-119s also dropped paratroopers, as the photo of “186” shows. This photo was taken by George Stubbs, when the aircraft was piloted by Earl James B. “Earthquake McGoon” McGovern.

CAT C-119 “186” piloted by McGovern and taken by George Stubbs in March 54

(CAT Bulletin, vol. VII, no.5, May 54, inside cover)

221 No takeoff or landing due to bad weather.
222 Plating, Failure in the Margins, pp.93/4.
223 E. C. Kirkpatrick, who had written the Squaw II contract, recalls the situation: The CAT pilots were concerned over the lack of French support as to intelligence and fighter cover. The C-119s, dropping at 1,500 feet, were shop up while the fighters remained at 10,000 feet, and so they refused to fly. CAT pilots Plank, Hudson, and Marsh were especially active, but the sentiment was pretty unanimous. So CAT’s President Alfred Cox and CAT’s Chief Pilot Bob Rousselet arrived on the scene. The first to speak was Cox, and his “we-have-a-job-to-do” speech placated the pilots. Then Bob Rousselet spoke, making threads and grating on their nerves, so that Cox had to speak again to retrieve the situation. Then, Trapnell talked to the French Air Force, and the CAT pilots got more money and intelligence briefings every morning thereafter, although the fighter cover never worked well (Leary, Interview with E. C. Kirkpatrick dated 26 April 80, transcript, in: UTD/Leary/B15F3).
226 On 18 March 54, McGovern still flew a CAT C-46 on a routine cargo mission from Okinawa to Taipei, when he and his co-pilot T.S. Wang received a radio SOS from a USAF C-119, whose passengers had bailed out. The C-46 went down below the clouds, spotted the people in the water, dropped a 20-man raft, called other aircraft and asked a Fooshing PBY to follow them so that this flying boat could pick up the people in the water (“Air Rescue”, in: CAT Bulletin, vol. VII, no.5, May 54, p.14).
On 19 March, CAT C-119s dropped pallet loads of one ton or more, but as the garrison had problems of moving them on the ground under heavy fire, they requested smaller bundles with a maximum of 100 kilos that had to be dropped directly on the strongpoint rather than the standard one-ton pallets dropped on the drop zones. CAT crews made approximately 87 airdrops over Dien Bien Phu in March. Aircraft suffered assorted 50-caliber damage. Aircraft # 557, pilot Hugh Hicks, was one of the first hit by 37mm fire. Extensive damage was done to [the] fuselage and both nacelles. ‘Flight characteristics reported by the pilot: extreme vibration and lack of aileron tab control. After being hit, the aircraft completed its drop and returned safely to base.’ Aircraft # 133, pilot [Thomas C.] Sailer, hit by 37mm gunfire in tail booms and rudders: ‘The drop mission was successfully completed and the pilot returned his aircraft to base with single rudder operation.’ After no less than 5 French Air Force C-47s had been shot down between 24 and 27 March 54, Colonel Nicot ordered the end of daytime drops from 2,500 feet. “Now, pilots would drop from 6,500 feet during the day, marking the first incremental boost in a drop altitude that would eventually reach 10,000 feet.” This meant that “parachuted loads had to be equipped

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228 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.102, note 47.
229 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.103, note 48.
230 The document “CAT in French Indochina” (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1) gives the accident as follows (p.16): “March 23, 1954: First napalm drop. [USAF had opposed use of C-119s for napalm drops because tests during the Korean War had shown that the returns did not warrant the risk and effort. USAF recommended that French use B-26’s for drops. French, however, reported good results with C-119’s.] One C-119 destroyed on ground at Cat Bi, taking off with 4,000 gallons of napalm; floor had buckled and props and other portions of aircraft damaged. French pilot reported that his copilot had retracted the gear without signal. [Some 770 tons of napalm had been droppped by mid-April.] No CAT crews involved.” Interestingly, the USAF records give 11 March 54 as the date, when C-119 “186” was terminated as transferred to the French Air Force (Smith, “The Fairchild C-119 Boxcar – Part 2”, p.76). So 11 March 54 was probably the date when C-119 “186” had been handed over to the French Air Force. Retrospectively, the aircraft was definitely transferred to them at the same date, so that its loss would be that of a French and not of an American aircraft.
234 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.103.
235 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.104.
with powder-train delays whose small explosive charge would open the parachutes at a pre-set altitude. The first experiences with the delayed drops were disastrous because complete loads either fell into enemy hands or the delay failed to open at all and the cargo impacted inside Dien Bien Phu like a bomb.” On 31 March 54, the ammunition drops were carried out by C-119s at high altitude with delayed opening parachutes, and 50 % of the packages fell outside the lines. On 5 April 54 at 1400 hours local time, a C-119 “flew over the fortress and dropped its entire load of storage batteries and two 75mm recoilless guns behind enemy lines. The controller on the ground laconically replied to the crew; ‘We’ll try to destroy it with artillery and air force.” Problems with the delayed action fuses, the lack of fighter coverage for their drops, an invariable drop schedule – every day the C-119s had to make their drops over Dien Bien Phu at 1000 and 1500 hours, so that their presence was predictable to enemy gunners –, and the language barrier made many flights unsuccessful. As none of the CAT crews spoke enough French to engage with the French controllers, they just followed their flight leaders or past experience. Consequently, on 13 April 54, five CAT-flown C-119s dropped their load – 800 rounds of 105mm howitzer ammunition – into enemy hands. The Americans’ drop accuracy was markedly improved when the French used British Legionnaires as air-traffic controllers during the CAT flights. On 15 April 54, the airdrops reached an all-time high with 250 tons, of which only approximately 15 % were misdropped.

But the accuracy of the AAA gunners continued to improve. “By April 24, one half of the airstrip at DBP was in enemy hands. This meant a smaller drop zone, which meant that pilots would have to take even greater chances. But the enemy fire continued to build. During the month, enemy anti-aircraft fire would bring down 8 aircraft (including 2 B-26’s shot down on the 26th at an altitude of 10,000’) and severely damage 47. [...] Once over the drop zones, the C-119’s found themselves caught in a murderous and continuous cross-fire which was always extremely heavy and quite accurate. Despite the fact that the Flying Boxcars could discharge all of their cargo on a single pass and were not in the anti-aircraft maximum fire zone more than about three minutes, nearly 60 direct hits were made on the ships flown by the American and French crews. Tail booms in particular came in for a large number of hits by both machine gun slugs and flak, as did tail surfaces and propellers. [...] On many of the Dien Bien Phu runs, the C-119’s flew at about 6,500 feet, climbed to about 13,500 feet to get out of flak range, then dropped in to altitudes of about 300 feet for passes over the drop zone. Later, as enemy gunfire became more intensive, drops had to be made at increasingly high altitudes. By early May, supplies were being dropped from as high as 10,000 feet and still were landing with great accuracy on a DZ 1,000 feet square.”

Also on 24 April 54, CAT’s Chief Pilot Paul Holden was severely injured, when a 37mm shell exploded inside the flight compartment of CAT C-119 “536”, but pilot Wallace A. Buford brought the aircraft safely back to base: “Paul Holden, CAT’s chief pilot, was flying in the right seat during a drop mission; Wallace A. Buford was in the left seat. A 37mm shell exploded on contact inside the flight compartment, severely wounding Holden. Fragmentation destroyed the top part of the compartment near the escape hatch. Another 37mm shell went through one of the booms and the tail but did not explode. Holden’s right arm was in bad shape. As his wife recalled: ‘The French surgeons intended to amputate Paul’s arm but during

237 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.111.
241 See the photo of the battle damage in Leary, Perilous missions, p.188.
his lucid moments he kept insisting that he be evacuated to any American military hospital in the area. Fortunately someone with enough sense managed to get him on a plane and shipped off to the Clark Air Force Base Hospital in the Philippines. ‘The arm was saved.’

Therefore, the CAT pilots again refused to fly further missions after returning from their missions on 24 April, as their contract stated that they did not have to fly combat missions. So on 26 April, French crews were transferred from the C-47s to the C-119s, but the high altitude drops on 27 April were catastrophic, when 70% of the packages fell outside the camp. In the face of the desperate situation, CAT crews returned to the C-119s on 30 April, and the French Air Force promised to provide adequate fighter cover. That day, 212 tons were dropped from 10,000 feet.243 As Bernard Fall reported, the CAT pilots had performed with distinction: ‘It had become common knowledge among the troops at Dien Bien Phu that the American civilian pilots were in many cases taking greater chances than the transport pilots of the French Air Force.’244 While French Air Force C-119 and C-47 pilots preferred to drop their loads at low altitudes and under the cover of darkness, “in the absence of close-air support, the CAT pilots, who dropped primarily during the day, responded to the shrinking DZ problem with extraordinary measures. Arriving over the drop zone at 10,000 feet, the pilots performed a high-speed spiraling descent, levelling off less than a hundred feet above the ground, and unloading their cargo. Following the drop, the aircrews repeated the maneuver in

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reverse, climbing as fast as possible to escape the threat of the flak.”

It was probably at about this time that CAT offices at Cat Bi Airport received the following radio message from Colonel Jean Nicot, commander of the French Air Transport Command:

“Due to your hard work and high quality execution of difficult missions, and through the cooperation of all concerned with the operation of the C-119 Group, DIEN BIEN PHU is holding and will hold.

My congratulations signed Colonel NICOT”

This message speaks volumes for the volunteer pilots of CAT and their heroism in defending South East Asia against the Communist invaders. Here are some of them standing next to a C-119, i.e. (front row) “Dutch” Brongersma, Steve Kusak, and Monson Shaver.


The whole list of CAT pilots who flew missions at Dien Bien Phu is much longer, however, and has been established by the late prof. William Leary with the number of airdrops added:

A. L. Judkins 64
S. A. Kusak 59
H. L. Marsh 58
E. W. Cedergren 57

245 Plating, Failure in the Margins, p.117.
In John Verdi’s log book, Charles Quilter found that Verdi flew 43 drop missions at Dien Bien Phu between 31 March and 6 May 54, plus 65 drop missions between 8 May and 16 July 54, flown out of Tourane or Cat Bi mostly to locations in Laos like Seno or Xieng Khouang (Summary extracts from John Verdi’s log book made by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD and kindly sent to the author on 29 March 2014).
On 1 May 54, CAT’s mission board at Cat Bi airfield, Haiphong, lists 6 C-119s: “562” (to be flown by Steve Kusak), “575” (to be flown by C. D. Hayes), “552” (to be flown by James McGovern), “581” (to be flown by N. N. Forte), “578” (to be flown by J. R. Dexheimer), and “564” (to be flown by H. L. Marsh). That day, 197 tons of supplies were dropped, but at least half of them was lost due to problems with the delay fuses on the parachutes.249

(CAT Mission Board of 1 May 1954, in: UTD/Leary/B30F4)

On 6 May 54, after several days of heavy rain, several CAT C-119s made drops over Dien Bien Phu, and it was during this operation that a legend of the early days of CAT, James B. McGovern alias “Earthquake McGoon”, was killed together with Wallace A. Buford, when their C-119 “149” was shot down.250 The CAT pilots usually flew twice daily, arriving over Dien Bien Phu at 10 a.m. and 3 p.m., so that the Vietminh gunners knew when to expect them. That afternoon, McGovern and Buford were to drop a 155mm howitzer. This had to be dropped low with three parachutes, and so McGovern came down in slow spirals.251 The circumstances of the crash were first described by Dave Olds in CAT Bulletin of June 1954, as told by eyewitness Capt. Steve Kusak: “Earthquake’s aircraft was hit in the left engine while turning into the drop run over Dien Bien Phu. The left engine was feathered, and the tail received another hit, all in the space of a few seconds. Mac couldn’t hold the aircraft, so

248 The list was published at http://www.air-america.org/News/CAT_Pilots_Honored_Lear.shtml.
started the left engine again, although he failed to get much power from it. Capt. Kusak was in radio contact with him and directed him to the closest area that looked possible for a belly landing. The C-119 was losing altitude rapidly and yawing badly, but Mac and Buford were putting up a good fight. Barely staggering over one ridge after another, and dipping down on the other side, the C-119 was guided toward a narrow, winding river. Finally, with the river a few yards away, and altitude down to feet and inches, the battle was lost. The left wing dug into the steep slope alongside the river, the aircraft flipped over twice and exploded252.... with Earthquake’s last words still ringing in Kusak’s ears.... ‘Looks like this is it, son’. Wally Buford, whose brief career with CAT had earned him the respect of us all through his flying ability, courage, high spirits and especially bringing wounded Chief Pilot Paul Holden back to safety in a badly shot up aircraft, joins McGovern on the roll of CAT immortals. It is an honor to all of us to have known them.”253

Another eyewitness of the crash was John Verdi, who flew C-119 “532” as a wingman of McGovern’s and Buford’s ill-fated aircraft. He described the accident as follows: “(From) my mission card for 6 May 54... the afternoon mission comprised 6 airplanes; we were airborne from Haiphong at 1519, Kusak leading in 578, McGOON next in 149; we (Marsh and I) were no.4 in 532… Lead made his drop (the main DZ, not Isabelle) at 1654; before Mac could make his, he took a 37 in the left wing. Fragments cut the oil supply line from the tank to the engine, the engine lost oil pressure, and the crew shut it down, jettisoned the load, and reversed course. They then found that fragments had cut control lines to the left rudder and left aileron, so they could not carry max power on the remaining engine and maintain control of the airplane. They had taken the hit below 7000 ft, and they had a 7000 ft ridge-line to cross to get out of the valley... so they restarted No.1 engine, and it ran long enough to get him over the first obstacle. We made our drop at 1658, then exited the valley and joined up with McGOON and Kusak at 1709. By now the oil-less engine had frozen, and the propeller had stopped at operating pitch and could not be feathered. Now they could not maintain level flight. We searched the maps for any kind of air-strip... there was one plotted at 104-04 E, 20-51 N; so we vectored Mac east, south, and then west down the Nam Ma River. Kusak begged him to jump out, but Mac never wore a parachute... he had such bad feet he wore carpet-slippers instead of boots, and he had long since declared that under no circumstances would he ever jump out of an airplane. Once below minimum parachute altitude, they were committed. They almost made it... a half mile short of the abandoned L-strip, the airplane hit the trees left-wing-first, cartwheeled, broke up, and burned. We made several passes looking for any sign of survivors (we knew the flight crew must have been killed on impact, but we thought one or more of the kickers might have been thrown clear). We relayed a request for a rescue helicopter through Gaddie in 135... later we learned it had been dispatched but then recalled. The crash occurred at 1734, which means the crew kept the airplane airborne for 40 minutes after they took the fatal hit. My mission card has this concluding comment: ‘Mac ought to have got Buford and the rest out.’ From the vantage point of 25 years later, what might have happened with the airplane lighter by five men is that Mac might have made the strip and the rest of them might not have survived the jungle. What is certain, though, is that Wally Buford knew better than anyone that YOU CAN NOT DITCH A C-119 AIRPLANE. Nevertheless, he stayed aboard and helped McGOON try it rather than use a parachute he knew would work. Mac had that effect on people... they believed in him.”254

252 According to Jean Arlaux (“1954, May 6th Dien Bien Phu”), this was near the village of Muong Het.
Years later, the CIA honored the death of those two heroes by the following words: “On the afternoon of May 6, 1954, six CAT C-119s departed Cat Bi airbase for Dien Bien Phu. One flown by McGovern and Buford carried desperately needed ammunition for paratroopers holding out at an encampment named Isabelle, the last of the five firebases in the valley still in French hands. The first aircraft in the CAT convoy safely dropped its load, but as McGovern approached the drop zone, the port engine sustained damage from a 37-mm anti-aircraft round. Soon after, a second hit damaged the horizontal stabilizer, severely impairing his ability to maintain flight. Guided by the pilots in the lead aircraft, McGovern and Buford struggled for 40 minutes to keep their aircraft aloft on one engine – long enough to attempt an emergency landing at a remote landing strip 75 miles to the southwest in Laos. Just a few hundred yards short of the landing strip, however, a wing tip clipped a tree. The aircraft cart wheeled, broke in half, and burned. McGovern and Buford died in the crash along with two French paratroopers. One Malay paratrooper and a French officer, Second Lieutenant Jean Arlaux, were injured and captured by Lao soldiers. The Malay paratrooper died from his injuries, leaving Arlaux as the sole survivor. The remaining French forces at Dien Bien Phu surrendered the next day after Viet Minh forces overran the Isabelle base.

McGovern’s death was publicized in newspapers and magazines at the time, but most details remained shrouded in secrecy for decades – especially the fact that CAT was an Agency proprietary. Although the May 24, 1954 edition of Life magazine carried an article entitled ‘The End for Earthquake’ that described the shootdown, McGovern’s remains were not recovered for nearly 50 years. In the late 1990s, a Department of Defense team investigating an unrelated crash noted an old C-119 propeller in a Laotian village. The team assumed the propeller was of French origin until they heard about McGovern and began to search for news clippings about the crash. Former CAT pilots soon launched a letter-writing campaign, lobbied Congress, former intelligence officials, and Director of Central Intelligence George Tenet to support a recovery effort. Investigators revisited northern Laos and exhumed skeletal remains from an unmarked grave near the village of Ban Sot in December 2002. DNA testing in 2006 confirmed that the remains were those of McGovern. On February 24, 2005, French Ambassador Jean-David Levitte posthumously awarded the Legion of Honor to McGovern, Buford, and surviving CAT pilots on behalf of France for their actions at Dien Bien Phu. On May 24, 2007, Earthquake McGoown was interred in Arlington National Cemetery. Buford’s remains were never recovered.”

The day after McGovern and Buford had died, Dien Bien Phu surrendered. Between mid-May and mid-August 54, the CAT C-119s continued dropping supplies to isolated French outposts and landed loads throughout Vietnam. In June, CAT aircraft operated into Thakhek and Mahaxay. “In late May, the Iron Age C-119 detachment moved from Cat Bi to the French base of Tourane [i.e. Danang]. Increasing Viet Minh activity in the Red Delta and runway wear at Cat Bi necessitated the shift. [...] Between sixteen and eighteen C-119s were kept at Tourane on three-week rotations and were available to fly out aircraft if required. A night evacuation


became essential in late June and the aircraft were removed to Tan Son Nhut and Clark. All planes returned the next day, after the base had withstood a determined perimeter attack. [...] The Joint Chiefs of Staff on July 12 directed the Far East Air Forces to remove eight aircraft [...], leaving only eight C-119s at Tourane, including four with American markings. [...] The departure of the last C-119 from Tourane on September 7 closed out the 483d Wing role in Indochina.”

From John Verdi’s log book we know that from 7 to 11 May 54, he dropped wire and pickets at Vientiane and Xieng Khouang, then flew to Tourane on 12 May and made rations and ammo drops to Pha Nop (a French military post in Laos) on 14 and 15 May, then returned to Cat Bi and made more wire and picket drops at Vientiane and Xieng Khouang between 16 and 18 May 54. During the rest of the month, he again dropped ammo, wire, but also supplies and equipment at Seno and Pha Nop, followed by similar drops in June and during the first half of July 54. In June and July, he also made some special flights: On 4 June 54, he flew C-119 “185”, he transported passengers from Tourane to Cat Bi, then prisoners from Cat Bi to Saigon, and at the end cargo from Saigon to Tourane. While in June and July 54, a lot of cargo was flown landing at Gia Lam, Tourane or Saigon, and while most drops were made at locations in Laos, there was also one drop of ammo, fuel, and rations that he made at Ai Nghia in Vietnam on 13 July 54. When the Communists incited riots throughout the country, CAT flew ammunition and other supplies from Hanoi to Saigon, and brought in tear gas from Okinawa in August. Between 12 and 14 June 54, CAT’s Fred Walker flew some 39,000 pounds of mortar shells to Seno in southern Laos, but then returned to air-dropping food, parachutes, barbed wire, and fenceposts.

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257 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp.20/1.
259 From pages of John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD.
261 Hamilton-Merritt, Tragic mountains, p.63.
C-119 “121” at Tourane on 28 July 54, taken by E.C. Kirkpatrick
(in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B34)

Extract from the log book of Roy Watts for C-119 operations out of Tourane in August 54
(in: UTD/Leary/B26F2)

The C-119s flown in French Air Force colors had the US Air Force titles removed and just wore the French Armée de l’Air roundel at the place of the USAF insignia. The USAF troop carrier squadron markings and any nose art that was on the planes were retained. Aircraft coming from the squadrons of the 403rd Troop Carrier Group / 483rd Troop Carrier Wing, who again ran the support operation to the French Air Force, had a roundel on the nose tip that resembled the French Air Force insignia, but had only one color: red, when the aircraft came from the “Flying Jennies” (815th TC), green, when the aircraft came from the “Packet Rats” (816th TC), and blue, when the aircraft came from the “Blue Tail Flies” (817th TC). The upper sections of the tail fins had the same color, but with 2 oblique white stripes inside the colored area that go down to the tail of the aircraft. Aircraft coming from the squadrons of the 314th Troop Carrier Group / 314th Troop Carrier Wing that were attached to the 483rd Troop Carrier Wing between 1 January 53 and 15 November 54, had a roundel on the nose.

262 Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, pp. 3-23.
263 The unit of interest here is the 314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium, which had been founded as the 314th Transport Group on 28 January 42 and was re-designated on 19 November 48. It was based at Ashiya, Japan, between 7 September 50 and 15 November 54 and flew C-119s between 1950 and 1957. The USAF aircraft records give these aircraft as belonging to the 314th Troop Carrier Wing, as the 314th Troop Carrier Group, Medium was assigned to the 314th Troop Carrier Wing between 1 November 48 and 8 October 57, although the
tip that was divided into 4 quarters, 2 of them white and 2 of them colored. Sometimes a short cheat line – equally colored or black – was added on the sides of the plane. The color indicated the squadron: red, when the aircraft came from the “Red Devils” (50th TCS), green, when the aircraft came from the “Green Hornets” (61st TCS), and probably blue, when the aircraft came from the “Blue Barons” (62nd TCS). The upper sections of the tail fins had the same color, but without any stripes. The aircraft seem to have been used by both the French and the American pilots without any distinction, and have been identified mostly from photographs. But as most of these photos are black and white, the actual colors in which the aircraft were painted cannot be determined.

C-119s taken by E. C. Kirkpatrick at Cat Bi airfield, Haiphong, probably in April 1954: “578” and “538” coming from the “Flying Jennies” (815th TCS) within the 483rd TCW (UTD/Kirkpatrick/ slide B255) and “137”, “559” and “558” coming from squadrons of the 314th Troop Carrier Group (UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)

314th TCG Medium was attached to the 483rd Troop Carrier Wing from 1 January 53 to 15 November 54 (see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/314th_Troop_Carrier_Group). The unit included the 50th Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Red Devils”; see http://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/50th_Airlift_Squadron), the 61st Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Green Hornets”; see http://61tcs.org/products.htm ), and the 62nd Troop Carrier Squadron (the “Blue Barons”; see http://www.safbtn.org/62nd_t_c_s.htm ), all of which flew C-119s in the fifties. 264 A photo of “Green Hornet” C-119 “566” can be found at http://61tcs.org/61tcs.org/images/C-119%20close%20lo.jpg
This is a list of the aircraft known to have been painted in the colors of the French Air Force – marked yellow the C-119s known to have been flown in the March-May 54 period:

C-119 “106” (that is 49-106 msn 10343); 265
C-119 “108” (that is 49-108 msn 10345); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; blue 266;
C-119 “109” (that is 49-109 msn 10346); 314th TCG 267;
C-119 “110” (that is 49-110 msn 10347); 268
C-119 “112” (that is 49-112 msn 10349); 269

265 John Verdi flew C-119 “106” out of Tourane between 16 and 19 June 54, making ammunition, rations and supply drops at Seno and Mahaxay on Laos (pages from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
266 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; a photo in Bowers, The USAF in South-East Asia, p. 12, shows the aircraft in the colors of the “Blue Tail Flies”.
267 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29.
268 John Verdi flew C-119 “110” out of Tourane on 16 May 54, dropping wire at Xiang Khouang and out of Cat Bi on 2 June 54, dropping rations drop at Seno (pages from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
269 John Verdi flew C-119 “112” out of Tourane on 22 June 54, but had to abort the flight due to engine trouble (pages from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
C-119 “114” (that is 49-114 msn 10351);270
C-119 “116” (that is 49-116 msn 10353); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; probably blue 271;
C-119 “121” (that is 49-121 msn 10358); 314th TCG 272;
C-119 “125” (that is 49-125 msn 10362); 314th TCG 273;
C-119 “127” (that is 49-127 msn 10364).274
C-119 “131” (that is 49-131 msn 10368); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW275
C-119 “133” (that is 49-133 msn 10370); 314th TCG 276;
C-119 “135” (that is 49-135 msn 10372); 314th TCG 277
C-119 “136” (that is 49-136 msn 10373); 314th TCG 278;
C-119 “137” (that is 49-137 msn 10374); 314th TCG 279;
C-119 “138” (that is 49-138 msn 10375);280
C-119 “139” (that is 49-139 msn 10376); 314th TCG; blue281;
C-119 “141” (that is 49-141 msn 10378);282
C-119 “143” (that is 49-143 msn 10380); 314th TCG 283;
C-119 “144” (that is 49-144 msn 10381); 314th TCG; probably red284;
C-119 “147” (that is 49-147 msn 10384);285
C-119 “149” (that is 49-149 msn 10386); 314th TCG; red or green286;

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270 John Verdi flew C-119 “114” out of Tourane on 22 June 54, dropping ammo at Seno in Laos (from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
271 Black and white photo at http://www.parachutiste-train.com/liebrepropos/c119-Cat_Bi1.jpg; apparently formerly with the 6th Troop Carrier Squadron (see Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72).
272 Shown in a photo by E.C. Kirkpatrick taken at Tourane on 28 July 54 (in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B34).
273 Black and white photo in one of the photo albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29.
274 C-119 “9127” was flown by Roy Watts out of Tourane on 11 and 12 August 54; the flight on 12 August went to Kadena via Clark “to haul riot control gases back to Saigon” and returned to Saigon on 12 August (Log book of Roy Watts, extracts; Letter of 13 February 81 sent by Roy Watts to Bill Leary, both in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
275 No photo available; see Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72.
276 In the tape: Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu at 6 minutes, 19 seconds, still with the USAF; black and white; CAT C-119 “133” was hit in March 1954 by 37mm gunfire, when piloted by Thomas C. Sailer, but returned safely to base (“CAT in French Indochina”, p.17, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1).
278 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29.
279 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29.
280 Frank Hughes flew C-119 “138” out of Haiphong between 21 and 23 April 54 on air drop missions to Dien Bien Phu (Log book of Frank Hughes, extracts, in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
281 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; in the tape: Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu at 15 minutes, 58 seconds; black and white, but with “Blue Tail Flies” on the tail; black and white photo of “139” also at http://imageshack.us/f90/airforcesouthvietnam194is9.png/.
282 John Verdi flew C-119 “141” out of Tourane on 29 June 54 (dropping wire at Seno), 7 July 54 (dropping wire at Thakhek in Laos), and on 12 July 54, hauling cargo from Tourane to Saigon, to Gia Lam, to Tourane (pages from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
283 See color slide no. B 252 at: UTD/Kirkpatrick; the color seems to be blue or green.
284 Black and white photo at http://www.parachutiste-train.com/liebrepropos/c119-Cat_Bi1.jpg; apparently formerly with the 50th TCS, i.e. the “Red Devils” (see Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72), so probably red.
285 Frank Hughes flew C-119 “147” out of Haiphong on 31 March, 3, 5, 9, and 13 April 54, and Roy Watts on 1 April 54 (Log books of Frank Hughes and Roy Watts, extracts, in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
286 Reportedly, the aircraft came from the 314th TCG / 61st TCS (see Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72), that is from the “C4 Green Hornets”; this seems to be confirmed by the photo of the tail of C-119 “149” depicted at http://61tcs.org/61tcs.org/images/scan0001-2.JPG; however, the aircraft may have been repainted red later, if it changed the unit; the way it is usually depicted, e.g. at https://www.cia.gov/library/center-for-the-study-of-intelligence/csi-publications/csi-studies/studies/vol52no2/images/painting-dienbiennphu-web.jpg, it seems to be an aircraft of the “Flying Jennies” (815th TCS) within the 483rd TCW; this was the C-119 in which McGovern and Buford were killed; see Jean Arlaux, “1954, May 6th Dien Bien Phu, McGovern: The last mission, the first step into legend. Three hours of my life with a hero”, in: CAT Bulletin, vol.29, no.1, Jan.-Feb.-Mar. 2004, pp.4-8.
C-119 “152” (that is 49-152 msn 10389); 314th TCG; red\textsuperscript{287};
C-119 “153” (that is 49-153 msn 10390);\textsuperscript{288}
C-119 “154” (that is 49-154 msn 10391); 314th TCG; red\textsuperscript{289};
C-119 “155” (that is 49-155 msn 10392);\textsuperscript{290}
C-119 “163” (that is 49-163 msn 10400); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG\textsuperscript{291};
C-119 “164” (that is 49-164 msn 10401);\textsuperscript{292}
C-119 “165” (that is 49-165 msn 10402);\textsuperscript{293}
C-119 “167” (that is 49-167 msn 10404);\textsuperscript{294}
C-119 “177” (that is 49-177 msn 10414);\textsuperscript{295}
C-119 “183” (that is 49-183 msn 10420);\textsuperscript{296}
C-119 “184” (that is 49-184 msn 10421);\textsuperscript{297}
C-119 “185” (that is 49-185 msn 10422); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG;\textsuperscript{298}
C-119 “186” (that is 49-186 msn 10423); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG; blue\textsuperscript{299};
C-119 “187” (that is 49-187 msn 10424); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG; probably blue\textsuperscript{300};
C-119 “32” (that is 51-2532 msn 10490);\textsuperscript{301}
C-119 “536” (that is 51-2536 msn 10494); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG; probably red\textsuperscript{302};
C-119 “537” (that is 51-2537 msn 10495); 314th TCG; probably green\textsuperscript{303};
C-119 “538” (that is 51-2538 msn 10496); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG; red\textsuperscript{304};
C-119 “539” (that is 51-2539 msn 10497); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCG; probably blue\textsuperscript{305};

\textsuperscript{287} Mentioned in Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72; this was a red C-119 of 314th TCG / 50th TCS (“Red Devils”); see the photo at \url{http://honglam.vnweblogs.com/gallery/4834/previews-med/283149-A12.jpg}.
\textsuperscript{288} Roy Watts flew C-119 “153” on 6 April 54 (Log book of Roy Watts, extracts, in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
\textsuperscript{289} Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; color photo of the nose with “Dutch” Brongersma in front at \url{http://www.reviewjournal.com/lvrj_home/2005/Feb-25-Fri-2005/photos/3medal.jpg}; coming from the “Red Devils” (50th TCS).
\textsuperscript{290} Roy Watts flew C-119 “155” on 5 April 54 (Log book of Roy Watts, extracts, in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
\textsuperscript{291} In the tape: \textit{Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu} at 15 minutes, 28 seconds; black and white.
\textsuperscript{292} Roy Watts flew C-119 “9164” between Tourane, Saigon, and Haiphong from 14 to 16 August 54 (Log book of Roy Watts, extracts, in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
\textsuperscript{293} Unit unknown, no photo available; mentioned in Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72.
\textsuperscript{294} John Verdi flew C-119 “167” out of Tourane on 8 June 54, dropping ammunition at Seno in Laos (pages from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
\textsuperscript{295} John Verdi flew C-119 “177” out of Tourane on 20 June 54, dropping wire at Seno (pages from John Verdi’s log book, kindly sent to the author by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD).
\textsuperscript{296} Unit unknown, no photo available; mentioned in Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72.
\textsuperscript{297} Unit unknown, no photo available; mentioned in Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72.
\textsuperscript{298} Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; according to Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72, C-119 “187” came from the same squadron as “186”, hence from the “Blue Tail Flies”.
\textsuperscript{299} Unit unknown; mentioned by Jean Arlaux (“1954, May 6th Dien Bien Phu”) as flown by John Verdi on the same mission as the ill-fated C-119 “149”.
\textsuperscript{300} Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; according to Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72, C-119 “536” came from the 63rd TCS, so was probably painted red (identification of the squadron colors of this squadron from \textit{Fliegerrevue Extra}, no.26, September 2009, p.109).
\textsuperscript{301} Unit unknown; mentioned by Jean Arlaux (“1954, May 6th Dien Bien Phu”) as flown by John Verdi on the same mission as the ill-fated C-119 “149”.
\textsuperscript{302} Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; according to Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72, C-119 “536” came from the 63rd TCS, so was probably painted red (identification of the squadron colors of this squadron from \textit{Fliegerrevue Extra}, no.26, September 2009, p.109).
\textsuperscript{303} Black and white photo at \url{http://www.parachutiste-train.com/librepropos/c119-Cat_Bi1.jpg}; according to Lloyd, \textit{Fairchild C-182 and C-119}, p.72, C-119 “537” came from the 61st TCS, i.e. the “Green Hornets”, so was probably painted green.
\textsuperscript{304} So coming from the “Flying Jennies” (815th TCS); color slide no. B 255 in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B255.
C-119 “541” (that is 51-2541 msn 10499);306
C-119 “543” (that is 51-2543 msn 10501);307
C-119 “545” (that is 51-2545 msn 10503); 314th TCG; probably green308;
C-119 “546” (that is 51-2546 msn 10504);309
C-119 “552” (that is 51-2552 msn 10510); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; probably blue310
C-119 “557” (that is 51-2557 msn 10515); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; probably green311;
C-119 “558” (that is 51-2558 msn 10516); 314th TCG312;
C-119 “559” (that is 51-2559 msn 10517); 314th TCG313;
C-119 “561” (that is 51-2561 msn 10519);314
C-119 “562” (that is 51-2562 msn 10520); 314th TCG315;
C-119 “563” (that is 51-2563 msn 10521); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; probably red316;
C-119 “564” (that is 51-2564 msn 10522); 403rd TCG / 816th TCS (“Packet Rats”)317;
C-119 “571” (that is 51-2571 msn 10529); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; probably green318;
C-119 “572” (that is 51-2572 msn 10530); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; probably red319;
C-119 “573” (that is 51-2573 msn 10531); 314th TCG; probably red320;
C-119 “575” (that is 51-2575 msn 10533); 314th TCG; probably green321;

305 No photo available; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “539” came from the same squadron as “186”, hence from the “Blue Tail Flies”.
306 Unit unknown; no photo available; see Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72.
307 Unit unknown; in the tape: Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu at 59 minutes, 3 seconds; black and white.
308 In the tape: Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu at 1 minute, 20 seconds; black and white; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “545” came from the 61st TCS, i.e. the “Green Hornets”, so was probably painted green.
309 Unit unknown; no photo available; see Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72.
310 No photo available; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “552” came from the same squadron as “186”, i.e. from the “Blue Tail Flies”, and lost 90% of the left inboard flat due to anti-aircraft fire.
311 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “557” came from the 65th TCS (identification of the squadron colors of this squadron from Fliegerrevue Extra, no.26, September 2009, p.109).
312 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29.
313 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29.
314 Frank Hughes flew C-119 “561” on 24, 25, and 30 April 54, Roy Watts on 9 and 10 April 54 (Log books of Frank Hughes and Roy Watts, extracts, in: UTD/Leary/B26F2).
315 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; also in the tape: Secret mission at Dien Bien Phu at 6 minutes, 28 seconds; black and white; a drawing at http://www.traditions-air.fr/images/avions/beernaert/C119C.jpg “assigns” C-119 “562” to the “Green Hornets”.
316 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “563” came from the 63rd TCS, so was probably painted red (identification of the squadron colors of this squadron from Fliegerrevue Extra, no.26, September 2009, p.109).
318 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; a photo in Leary, Perilous missions, p.182, shows that this aircraft came from the “Packet Rats” (816th TCS); according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “571” came from the 65th TCS, so was probably painted green (identification of the squadron colors of this squadron from Fliegerrevue Extra, no.26, September 2009, p.109).
319 Black and white photo in one of the albums of UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “572” came from the 63rd TCS, so was probably painted red (identification of the squadron colors of this squadron from Fliegerrevue Extra, no.26, September 2009, p.109); a photo of the red “572” in USAF colors can be found at http://www.scaleworkshop.com/workshop/images/C-119C-R01.jpg.
320 A black and white photo of “573” at http://www.traditions-air.fr/images/photos/div_unite_inconnue_14.jpg; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “573” came from the 50th TCS, i.e. the “Red Devils”, so was probably painted red.
321 No photo available; according to Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72, C-119 “575” came from the 61st TCS, i.e. the “Green Hornets”, so was probably painted green.
C-119 “577” (that is 51-2577 msn 10535); 314th TCG\textsuperscript{322}; C-119 “578” (that is 51-2578 msn 10536); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW; red\textsuperscript{323}; C-119 “581” (that is 51-2581 msn 10539); 403rd TCG / 483rd TCW;\textsuperscript{324} C-119 “903” (?), possibly 52-5903 msn 11070; no squadron markings\textsuperscript{325}

CAT Flight line, Cat Bi airfield, Haiphong, on 23 March 54, taken by E. C. Kirkpatrick (in: UTD/Leary/B30F4)

Page from John Verdi’s log book for May 1954, showing drops in Laos (kindly supplied by Charles J. Quilter II, PhD)

\textsuperscript{322} No photo available; mentioned in Lloyd, Fairchild C-182 and C-119, p.72.
\textsuperscript{323} So coming from the “Flying Jennies” (815th TCS); color slide no. B 255 in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B255.
\textsuperscript{324} See the photo in CAT Bulletin, vol. VII, no.4, April 54, p.5.
\textsuperscript{325} A photo in Leary, Perilous missions, p.182, reprinted here, shows the flight line at Haiphong on 23 March 54; the second aircraft on that photo has no squadron markings; in a color slide published at http://www.frenchwings.net/indochina/gallery/displayimage.php?album=4&pid=740#top_display_media an equally anonymous C-119 can be seen in the background behind “186”, but it seems to have “903” on the fin – probably the same aircraft. Possibly, this was the first C-119 that had been painted in French Air Force colors, before it was decided to keep the USAF squadron markings in order to save time.
Some more CAT C-119s, all taken by Enos C. Kirkpatrick at Cat Bi between March and May 1954 (all in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B29)
“578” and “538” at Cat Bi 27 April 54
(UTD/Kirkpatrick/crde no. B251)
Refugee flights

Still another type of contract work was done immediately after the Geneva Agreement of 21 July 1954. As the agreement permitted free movement of civilians for a certain time, a mass exodus began from the North to the South. Chinese officials immediately chartered 2 CAT C-46s to evacuate Nationalist supporters from Hanoi to Saigon for a month: “CAT was once again called upon for the important task of evacuating freedom-loving Chinese from the claws of Communism and two C-46 Commandos piloted by Harry Cockrell and John Plank, were flown to Hanoi from Tainan on July 16/17 under charter to the Free Chinese Government. While a large part of the local population of three hundred thousand chose to remain in Hanoi, which will become the capital of Communist North Vietnam when the state is split in two by the cease-fire agreement, about 7,000 loyal Nationalist Chinese residing in the rich ‘rice bowl’ of French Indochina, were anxious to leave for Haiphong and Saigon. They had registered previously with the Chinese Consulates in that area. There are approximately 40,000 Chinese in northern Indochina. Original plans called for the airlift of 500 Chinese from Hanoi to Haiphong per day and from there the refugees would travel by sea to Saigon in the first stage of the evacuation to Taiwan.”

A group of Chinese waiting to board the CAT plane in Hanoi

“Thousands of Chinese nationals residing in North Vietnam, who had registered with the Chinese Consulate in Hanoi, preferred to be evacuated immediately after the cease-fire agreement was signed. Numerous loudspeakers from the Chinese Communists side of the border kept blaring away to the fleeing refugees with sugar-coated promises of preferential treatment. Their efforts were fruitless as the loyal Nationalist Chinese chose to leave their homes before the ‘Bamboo Curtain’ fell on them. In view of this situation, the Nationalist Chinese Government in Taiwan chartered a special CAT plane to evacuate them to South Vietnam. The airlift operation, which was completed on August 22nd, brought a total of 1,526 Chinese refugees to freedom. All flights departed from Hanoi, with one going to Haiphong and the remaining 26 to Saigon.”

**Operation Cognac**

On 18 August 54, CAT’s Enos Kirkpatrick signed a new contract with the French at Saigon for Operation Cognac – the airlift of people from North Vietnam to South Vietnam under the terms of the Geneva Agreement. CAT was to supply up to 12 C-46s with crews and to receive $192/hour for the aircraft with a minimum guarantee of 1,000 hours a month, plus $70 per flying hour for the crew (pilot and copilot). The insurance against losses were $10,000 per individual and $90,000 per aircraft. Operation Cognac began on 22 August 54 and lasted for two months until 4 October 54. CAT operations was at Hanoi, but was transferred to Haiphong, home of CAT’s local maintenance station, on 19 September 54. CAT’s Management representative was “Dutch” Brongersma, and A. V. Ozorio was in charge of Flight Operations.

“Six C-46s arrived in Saigon on August 22nd and another six followed shortly thereafter in one of the largest exodus from a Communist regime.”

Due to French competition, the number of CAT C-46s used in Operation Cognac was reduced to 7 CAT C-46s since 18 September. One of the CAT pilots involved in this operation was “Doc” Johnson, who flew

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330 On 19 August 1954, CAT contracted with the French to provide a minimum of 1,000 flying hours per month using its own C-46 type aircraft. On the termination of this contract on 5 October 1954, CAT had provided a
C-46 B-870 Saigon-Hanoi-Tourane (= Danang) on 20 August, Tourane-Hanoi-Saigon on 21 August, and Saigon back to Hanoi on 22 August 54. For the following days, “Doc” Johnson was stationed at Hanoi and flew C-46 B-840 Hanoi-Saigon-Tourane-Haiphong-Hanoi on 23, Hanoi-Saigon-Seno (in southern Laos)-Hanoi on 24, Hanoi-Saigon-Seno-Hanoi on 25, Hanoi-Saigon-Haiphong on 26, Haiphong-Hanoi-Saigon-Hanoi on 27, Hanoi-Saigon-Hanoi on 28, the same route on 29, Hanoi-Saigon-Hanoi-QAC (?; i.e. a code used for airports that the pilots were not allowed to name)-Tourane on 30, and Tourane-Haiphong on 31 August 54. Similar flights took him from Haiphong-Hanoi-Saigon-Hanoi on 1, Hanoi-Saigon-Haiphong on 2, and on 3 September 54, “Doc” Johnson flew from Haiphong back to Tainan via Hong Kong, having flown CAT C-46 B-840 all the time.331


The return flights to the North were often used to smuggle north agents of the CIA’s Saigon Military Mission and weapons to be used for causing trouble to the new Communist regime.332 “An interesting aspect of Cognac was the association with [Edward G.] Lansdale’s Saigon Military Mission (CIA). As Lansdale later reported: ‘CAT asked SMM for help in obtaining a French contract for the refugee airlift, and got it. In return, CAT provided SMM with the means for secret air travel between [the] North and Saigon.’ SMM was born in Washington policy meetings during early 1954, before the fall of Dienbienphu. As Lansdale wrote: ‘The SMM was to enter into Vietnam quietly and assist the Vietnamese [– especially against the Vietminh]. [...] The French were to be kept as friendly allies in the process, as far as possible. [...] Later, after Geneva, the mission was modified to prepare the means for undertaking paramilitary operations in Communist areas.’ Lansdale arrived in Saigon on June 1. On July 1, Major Lucien Conein arrived – [he was a] paramilitary specialist, well-known to the French for his help with French-operated maquis in Tonkin against the Japanese in 1945 [...]. Conein was responsible for developing a paramilitary organization in the north, to be in position when the Vietminh took over. Conein had MAAG cover, moved north as part of MAAG staff working on [the] refugee problem. The team had headquarters in Hanoi, with a branch at Haiphong. Among its cover duties, the team supervised the refugee flow for the Hanoi airlift operated by CAT.

331 From the log book of “Doc” Johnson, pages sent by James Johnson to Tom Ziemba who kindly submitted them to the author on 13 December 2011.
332 Conboy / Andradé, Spies and commandos, pp. 9/10.
Meanwhile, a second team operated in the south, exploring possibilities of organizing resistance against [the] Vietminh from bases in the south. Members included Raymond Wittmayer and Edward Williams. Edward Bain and Richard Smith [were] assigned to [the] support group. The northern group was involved in a number of ‘dirty tricks’ operations,
including the sabotage of busses and the railroad. They also identified targets for future paramilitary operations. However, the mission generally was a failure, with little success in leaving an effective stay-behind network. The northern SMM team left [Hanoi] with the last French troops [on October 9].”\textsuperscript{333} But they did not go that far: “Finishing their sabotage, Conein and his men shifted to Haiphong – which was not to be turned over to the Viet Minh until May 1955.”\textsuperscript{334} Especially in January 1955, CAT C-46s flew supplies, arms and equipment to Haiphong, where they were hidden inside building foundations or buried on cemeteries during phony funeral ceremonies. Other supplies, including 14 radios, 300 carbines, 50 pistols, and 300 pounds of explosives, were flown north in February and March 55 and hidden in caches along the Red River.\textsuperscript{335} When Haiphong was handed over to the Vietminh in May 1955, Conein’s detachment retreated south to Saigon. Some of the arms caches were discovered only in 1964.\textsuperscript{336}

After the end of Operation \textit{Cognac}, CAT’s C-47 stationed at Saigon – in the meantime it was B-817 – continued to support the refugees that had come to the southern part of Vietnam. “From Vietnam’s southern city of Rach Gia up to Sadec, a distance of about seventy kilometers, huge tracts of land lie idle, the horizon broken only to the northwest by the famous Seven Mountains which separate Vietnam from Cambodia. This is the Mekong delta, site of the most spectacular reclamation and resettlement program in the Far East. More than 100,000 refugees from Communist North Vietnam and persons displaced by the war in 1954 are being returned, under the Cai San project, to these former rich lands comprising approximately 200,000 acres (80,000 hectares). [...] Today [i.e. in July 1956], as during the initial survey period prior to December 1955, CAT’s B-817, which is chartered to the United States Operations Mission at Saigon, has made countless trips, over and into the Cai San area, carrying technicians, government officials, and supplies. The plan to rehabilitate these abandoned ricelands and to resettle 100,000 persons there was announced by President Ngo

\textit{(CAT Bulletin, vol. IX, no.7, July 1956, p.5)}

\textsuperscript{333} “CAT in French Indochina”, pp.24/5, in: UTD/Kirkpatrick/B1F1.
\textsuperscript{334} Conboy / Andradé, \textit{Spies and commandos}, p. 9.
\textsuperscript{335} Conboy / Andradé, \textit{Spies and commandos}, pp. 9/10.
\textsuperscript{336} Leary, \textit{Perilous missions}, pp.192/3; Conboy / Andradé, \textit{Spies and commandos}, p. 10.
Dinh Diem last December 30 and requests began to reach the Commissioner General’s office the next day. By the end of the first week, 42,850 refugees from North Vietnam had applied. [...] Presently only one crop of rice is grown annually, but with the addition of irrigation facilities it is hoped to produce two crops. [...] It is important that drainage canals be dug first; later, irrigation canals will be dug between each drainage canal. [...] The United States Operations Mission has appropriated from American Aid more than US $ 1-million for equipment to be used in the reclamation work. The bulk of the expenditure will be for a hundred Diesel-powered tractors; there also will be more than 100 plows, harrows and bush cutters to be used with the tractors. A mobile machine shop and twelve mobile lubricating trailers are being imported to service the other equipment.”

CAT’s role in Vietnam did not end with *Cognac*, but a small operation always linked to the CIA’s Saigon Military Mission and to USOM/USAID remained in Saigon – with mostly one C-47 (in September 1956 it was B-827 depicted below) and 4 people, including Al Pope and Clyde Bauer. In January 1958, Dale Williamson replaced Al Pope in Saigon. Clyde Bauer (?) was Station Manager at Saigon. Flying was an average of 120 hours a month, point-to-point for the USOM/USAID mission, with Chinese co-pilot and radio operator. On Tuesdays, there was a scheduled flight from Saigon to Phnom Penh, Bangkok, Vientiane, and Bangkok, returning the next day.\(^\text{338}\)

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\(^{338}\) Dale D. Williamson, interview made by William M. Leary at Bellevue, WA, on 13 July 1987; Professor Leary’s notes are preserved at UTD/Leary/B43F5.
VI) GUATEMALA 1954

Another clandestine operation, in which several CAT employees and 1 unidentified C-47 were involved, was to overthrow the regime of Jacobo Arbenz Guzmán, the leftist president of Guatemala accused to be controlled by Moscow. As early as 1952, US policymakers viewed the government of President Arbenz Guzmán with some alarm, because of his alliance with the Soviet Union and because much of the land of the United Fruit Company had been expropriated and redistributed. So, in 1952 a first covert action program was created by the CIA, called PBFORTUNE and designed to topple the Arbenz government. According to this plan, Guatemalan exiles supported by Nicaraguan and Honduran aircraft would overthrow the Arbenz regime. But when the plan was blown up in October 1952, it was abandoned. By the fall of 1953, a new program was set up, called PBSUCCESS. In early 1954, a group of rightist officers, led by Colonel Carlos Castillo Armas and backed by the CIA in Operation PBSUCCESS, organized troop and sabotage teams who were trained in Honduras. In January 1954, another training camp was established in the Canal Zone of Panama. On 16 June 54, Castillo Armals’ CIA-supported force of armed exiles entered Guatemala, advancing tentatively in the hinterland. Places to be bombed by the Liberation Air Force were Zacapa, whose railroad station was among the first places to be taken by the rebels, the port of Puerto Barrios, and the capital. On that occasion, Whiting Willauer, one of the founders of CAT, who had become US Ambassador to Honduras in late 1953, among other duties within the CIA activities to overthrow Arbenz, made arrangements for CAT pilots to fly for the Castillo Armals air force. CAT pilots who are known to have flown in Guatemala are Messrs Bussard, Johnson, Sims, Welk, and Wells, and they were to fly F-47s and to do training for the Liberation Air Force, but most of the time, they probably flew C-47 support missions. On 13 May 54, the Chief, Air Support asked the Chief, Project permission to immediately recruit more American crews for the period between 20 May 54 and 20 July 54.

342 Leary, Perilous missions, p.211; Hagedorn, Central American and Caribbean Air Forces, p.146; Andrew, For the President’s eyes only, pp.206-11; Prados, Presidents’ secret wars, p. 98-106, especially p. 101.
343 Interview with Eddie F. Sims conducted by Prof. William Leary at Watkinsville, GA on 27 May 1988, written summary at: UTD/Leary/B43F5. Sims does not recall Wells.
344 E. C. Kirkpatrick, interview conducted by Prof. William Leary on 26 April 1980, at: UTD/Leary/B43F3. It is difficult to find any hint at this Guatemala operation in official CAT papers – the otherwise unknown “De Kanel project”, which had been discussed by Acting Director of Operations Bob Rousselet and others at Hong Kong in February 54 (see CAT’s Operations Division, Monthly Report for February 54, p. 2, in: UTD/Leary/ B21F1) had nothing to do with Guatemala: CAT withdrew from the ATA (Dekanel) project on 15 March 54 (Rosbert’s diary for 1954, in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1) which would have involved “a plane furnished and operated by another carrier (FTL)” (Rosbert’s Report about the Hong Kong Meeting of March 54, in: UTD/Rosbert/B2F1), and the Flying Tigers (FTL) did not have any C-47s in 1954.
345 William Leary, summary of Stephen Schlesinger/Stephen Kinzer, Bitter Fruit, Garden City 1982, in: UTD/Leary/Series III B2F10. Another report says that during the Guatemala Revolution of 1954, the CAT pilots flew resupply missions with C-54s and tactical missions in USAF-provided P-51s (Leary, Manuscript, p.291, in: UTD/Leary/B19F3), but there were no C-54s or P-51s in the Guatemala operation.
These CAT crews were to fly the 2 C-47s allegedly owned by CALLIGERIS (Castillo Armas). Other CAT pilots at Guatemala included Eddie Sims and Frank Hughes said to have flown night drops. All of these CAT pilots received their regular pay plus some extras listed by the Chief of Air Operations. Between 18 and 29 June 1954, a small number of rebel aircraft attacked the capital and later other Guatemalan installations from bases in Nicaragua and Honduras, driving Arbenz Guzmán to exile in Mexico in July 54.

But only some pilots of that Liberation Air Force came from CAT, while others were former USMC pilots, local bush pilots, and other citizens of Central American states. In December 53, many of the aircraft to be used in Guatemala had been transferred to a “Medical Institute” at Miami, which then sold them to a variety of companies engaged in aerial survey, crop dusting, and scenic flights throughout the Caribbean area. Those aircraft included a Cessna 140, a Cessna 180, a Lockheed P-38M Lightning recon version, plus 6 Republic F-47Ns ostensibly on loan to the CIA from the Puerto Rican Air National Guard, which rented them to the Nicaraguan Government and delivered them to Puerto Cabezas in Nicaragua, which had also been the airstrip, where the remaining fleet had been put together since March 54. Most aircraft were then flown to a small airfield in Honduras. Some sources state that the Liberation Air Force also had a PBY-5A, but this is not true. There were also 3 C-47s, however: Two of them arrived “on loan” in March 54, and the third one was acquired in Washington DC in May 54.

The identities of the 3 C-47s are a mystery. Prior to the operation, several aircraft were ferried to Andrews AFB, Washington DC: 3 USAF C-124s on 22, 26, and 27 February 54 and 2 C-47s on 2 March 54. On 23 March 54, the 2 C-47s were ferried to Central America, evidently to France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone. On 5 March 54, Chief, Air Operations, wrote to Chief, PM: “The two sterile C-47 aircraft will be held at Andrews AFB, Washington, DC until 22 March 54. On 22 March the two C-47s piloted by [razed out, probably USAF] air crew will be flown to [razed out, probably France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone] via West Palm Beach, Florida. […] Aircraft will remain at [razed out, probably France Field] for PBSUCCESS operational use until completion of mission.”

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348 Interview with George Stevens conducted by Prof. William Leary at Santa Barbara, CA on 11 September 1985, written resume, at: UTD/B43F5. On 21 May 54, PBSUCCESS was looking for more American air crews (see Memo dated 28 May 54, i.e. CIA document no. 923161, readable on the CIA website at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000923161.pdf).
351 The Memorandum “Disposal of Airplanes” of 9 July 54 (CIA document no. 920333 published at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000920333.pdf) states: “Airplane involved in PBSUCCESS were: a. 3 C-47s, b. 6 F-47s, c. 1 P-38, d. 1 Cessna 180, e. 1 Cessna 140.”
352 The original “General plan of operations” dated 14 February 54 even provided for “six (6) transports, DC-3 type” (“General plan of operations” of 14 February 54, i.e. CIA document no. 913410, readable at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000913410.pdf), but this idea was later abandoned.
354 France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone was the base from where the CAT pilots operated the C-47s (Interview with Eddie F. Sims conducted by Prof. William Leary at Watkinsville, GA on 27 May 1988, written summary at: UTD/Leary/B43F5).
According to the Operational Air Support Plan of 5 March 54, the first 2 C-47s were to be “two Agency sterile C-47’s – these aircraft returning from [razed out] for this operation.”\footnote{Operational Air Support Plan of 5 March 54, Annex B} In a cable dated 22 March 54, CIA Headquarters at Washington informed FJHOPEFUL (believed to be France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone)\footnote{FJHOPEFUL was the Regional Command Station reporting directly to LINCOLN, the CIA station at Opa Locka, FL (see at Air Pouch no. HULA-275 of 24 March 54 from LINCOLN, online readable on the CIA website at \url{http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000916984.pdf})} that 2 C-47s – “3520” and “3708” – would arrive on 24 March 54 at 2000Z (Greenwich Mean Time), i.e. at 15.00 h local time, requesting “transportation for six ODUNIT [that is US Air Force\footnote{See U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations, Guatemala, 1952-1954, released by the Office of the Historian, Abbreviations and Cryptonyms, at: \url{http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54Guat/terms}.}] crew members”.\footnote{Cable dated 22 March 54 from “Director” to FJHOPEFUL, CIA document no. 917007, published on the CIA website at: \url{http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000917007.pdf}} Both serials are possibly fake identities.\footnote{The real “3520” would be 42-23520 (msn 9382), which reportedly crashed in Burma on 2 May 44, but then reemerged in USAF records as gained from MDA at HQC Bolling with 1100 OG on 8 September 56 (possibly rebuilt by the CIA?), starting another career with the USAF until it went to the South Vietnamese Air Force on 15 November 1972, although there seems to be an error in the paper work (Gradidge, \textit{The Douglas DC-1/DC-2/DC-3}, vol. II, p.369). The real “3708” would be USAF 42-23708 (msn 9570) destroyed at Clark AFB on 11 March 45 (Gradidge, p.373) or USAF 42-93708 (msn 13650), which was based at Rhein Main Air Base in 1954, before it went to the Spanisch Air Force on 12 June 57 (Gradidge, p.447). Possibly, this sterile “3708” was another C-47 rebuilt by the CIA – perhaps from 42-23708?} Anyway, the two C-47s operated out of Panama apparently did not wear any visible registration number or serial, as no identification is given for these C-47s in the log book of Doc Johnson.\footnote{See the extract from “Doc” Johnson’s log book published.} On 20 May 54, LINCOLN requested a fake contract stating that these 2 C-47s had been sold or leased to CALLIGERIS, i.e. to Castillo Armas – a
contract that was to be used for the cover story. The origin of the third C-47 is equally unknown, as the latest known document referring to it, the Progress Report for PBSUCCESS of 4 May 54, only notes that “arrangements were completed by Chief, Administration, DD/P and AMD for the assignment of one C-47 aircraft to PBSUCCESS.”

After the coup, i.e. in early July 54, there was a lot of cable traffic regarding the disposal of the aircraft. One of those cables, no. 4562 from “Lincoln” to Sherwood”, first states that the “3 C-47’s were only loaned to [the] Project” and then recommends “one CAT C-47’s [to be] turned over to [...]. Return other two C-47’s to original owners.” So one of the 3 C-47s came from CAT – but the identity of this CAT C-47 is unknown. It seems to be evident, however, that the 2 C-47s delivered in March 54 were Agency-owned aircraft that used false identities: “3520” posed as the ill-fated 42-23520 (msn 9382) and was later transferred from the CIA to the USAF in 1956 for another career in South Vietnam; “3708” posed as the ill-fated 42-23708 (msn 9570) and was probably the C-47 that joined the Fuerza Aérea Guatemalteca in the summer of 1954. The CAT aircraft was the 3rd C-47, which arrived only in May 54. This also explains why USAF crews (ODUNIT) had to ferry the first 2 C-47s to Panama in March 54 and why the first group of CAT pilots did not bring their own C-47 with them, but arrived on the scene using different airlines. Indeed, all four of the CAT pilots arrived at Miami on 6 March 54, 2 of them with Eastern Airlines, and one with National Airlines. On Sunday, 7 March 54, they had a meeting with LINCOLN people from Opa Locka and left Miami on 8 March for Havana. They then stayed at Havana until 23 March, when they took a Pan American flight to Panama via Guatemala City, San Salvador and Managua, allowing them to view the country. At Panama, they passed one night at the


365 Candidates seem to be B-815 (msn 19258 ex 42-100795) and B-817 (msn 19256 ex 42-100793), as they had removable aircraft registration plates on the fin (CAT’s equipment list of February 54, in: Leary, Perilous missions, pp. 218/9). But B-815 was assigned to operations in Vietnam in March 54 (CAT’s Operations Division, Monthly Report for February 54, p. 12, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1) and B-817 was in use with Booklift in October 53 (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for October 53, p.3, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7), and it was not before April 54 that there were negotiations to release the aircraft from the contract (Tachikawa Station Monthly Report for April 54, p.2, in: UTD/Lewis/B1F7). The Monthly Report of CAT’s Operations Division for February 54, p.12 (in: UTD/Leary/B21F1) gives C-47s B-811 (msn 18947 ex 42-100484) and B-823 (msn 13399 ex 42-93482) as assigned to “special” missions, but one of them was operated for the CIA’s “SEA Supply” at Bangkok: B-823 left Tainan for Bangkok on 10 February 54 (CAT’s Operations Division, Monthly Report for February 54, p. 3, in: UTD/Leary/B21F1), and B-811 crashed on 20 October 54, while with “SEA Supply” (“B-811 Report”, in: CAT Bulletin, vol. VII, no.12, December 1954, p.11).
Washington Hotel, Colon. In an interview with the late Prof. William Leary, Eddie Sims says that he had been selected for the Guatemala project together with Doc Johnson, Bussart, and Welk. So, Sims “went to Miami, where he was briefed by USAF Capt. Stan Rolag. The CAT group travelled by commercial airlines to Panama. They were based at France Field, where they flew two C-47s provided by USAF. (The markings were butted out, but on first trip to Managua, dew caused markings to reappear). Major Sig Holmes was the senior man in charge at France, with Capt. Rolag handling day-to-day operations. Sims was CAT representative. The project lasted 60-90 days and consisted of flying supplies to Managua and Tegucigalpa (Honduras). The CIA had other pilots who flew to Guatemala."

On 25 March, “the CAT pilots were picked up […] and brought to FJHOPEFUL. [blank, i.e. Major Sig Holmes?] made the Contract and the CAT pilots were loaded into two civilian sedans. The sedans proceeded to FJHOPEFUL via indirect routes to insure no surveillance. 2. Thursday, 25 March: [blank] and [blank] supervised setting up air operations, sterilization of aircraft, briefing of sterile air crews, and establishing billets and messing facilities and procedures. 3. Friday, 26 March: Robertson and [blank] recruited four cargo kickers from the guard force at FJHOPEFUL; loaded aircraft for first black flight; pilots briefed by air operations and security; first black flight departed as scheduled and returned as scheduled."

The mission itself had 4 phases: Phase One meant the transportation of supplies from the US to Central America. Beginning on 23 February 54, the 3 USAF C-124s carried cargo from Andrews AFB, Washington DC via “Lincoln” (that is Opa Locka, FL) to “FJHOPEFUL”, i.e. France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone. The last C-124 flight was on

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370 LINCOLN was the PBSUCCESS headquarters in Florida (U.S. Department of State, Foreign Relations, Guatemala, 1952-1954, released by the Office of the Historian, Abbreviations and Cryptonyms, at: http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54Guat/terms), at Opa Locka near Miami: Schlesinger/Kinzer (Bitter Fruit, Garden City 1982, summary by William Leary, at: UTD/Leary/Series III B2F10) and Hagedorn (Republic P-47 Thunderbolt, p.41), state that PBSUCCESS was run out of Opa Locka by Colonel Albert Haney, who had been appointed by the CIA as field chief of the operation in October 53. On 21 February 54, LINCOLN warned that these “black flights” should be reduced to 50 %, if no secure refuelling could be arranged (Cable dated 21 February 54, i.e. CIA document no. 135958, readable on the CIA website at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000135958.pdf). Headquarters gave a similar warning on 4 June 54 (see Memo for the record dated 4 June 54, readable on the CIA website at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000922750.pdf).

371 The list “Abbreviations and Cryptonyms”, published for the Foreign Relations with Guatemala, 1952-54, by the US Department of State at http://history.state.gov/historicaldocuments/frus1952-54Guat/terms, only says that “FJHOPEFUL” was a military base. “FJHOPEFUL” was also the base of the 2 C-47s used in PBSUCCESS (Memorandum “Air Support” of 8 July 54, Annex IV, V, VI, i.e. CIA document no. 920335, online readable at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000920335.pdf). As, according to the Memorandum “Control of PBSUCCESS Black Flights through Panama Air Traffic Control” dated 8 April 54 (at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000916573.pdf), those C-47s operated “within the Panama Air Traffic Control and Air Defense areas” and might return only in the middle of the night after a flight of 10 hours, it is very likely that “FJHOPEFUL” was France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone.
23 March 54. Between 23 April and 26 June 54, other aircraft – more C-124s, some C-118s, C-47s, a C-54 and even 2 B-25s – carried cargo from Andrews AFB to “FJHOPEFUL”, most of them probably regular USAF aircraft. “During this period, approximately 250,000 lbs of equipment was received, including mortars, 47 mm and ammo, 9 mm and 7.62 ammo, rifles, sub-machine guns, LMG, hand grenades, fragmentation and concussion, TNT, demolition charges (shaped). Also included rations, medical supplies, equipment, parachutes and other miscellaneous items which were to be included in the kits as prescribed by LINCOLN. All these materials were opened, inspected and sterilized if needed for further shipment or packaging. Packaging of these items was for caching, which consisted of cleaning and oiling all fireable weapons, wrapping in cloth, sewing in burlap and dipping in tar, the tar acting as a preservative for burial purposes. At the height of the operation there were approximately 12 people [...] to inspect, package and wrap the above-mentioned materials and load aircraft leaving FJHOPEFUL for WSHOOFs”, that is for Honduras.

During Phases One A to Four, most of the transportation was done by the C-47s. During Phase One A, that is between 26 March and 26 May 54, one of the C-47s carried more than 23,500 lbs of sensitive cargo from “FJHOPEFUL” (i.e. France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone) to “SOMERSET” in Nicaragua, believed to stand for Managua. For “approximately 85 CALLIGERIS [that is Castillo Armas] personnel had received training in Nicaragua, 75 of these under the guidance of PIVALL. PIVALL graduated 30 sabotage leaders, 6 shock troop leaders, 16 organizers, 4 staff personnel, and 19 incompetents. Exactly 13 radio operators graduated under the guidance of DUNAVANT and MIDDLECOT. [...] The Nicaraguan Government permitted training and support in the form of air operations to

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372 USAF C-124 “1008”, i.e. 52-1008 (msn 43917), arrived at FJHOPEFUL on 24 March 54 at 11.00 hours local time (see cable of 22 March 54 from “Director”, i.e. CIA Headquarters, to SROBA, online readable on the CIA website at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000917006.pdf).


378 Cooper, “Guatemala since 1954”, at http://www.acig.org/artman/publish/printer_162.shtml. The Liberation Army had 2 training camps in Nicaragua, one on the island of Momotombito in Lake Managua and one at El Tamarindo, an estate owned by Nicaragua’s President Anastasio Somoza located between Managua and León. A landing strip was built at Puerto Barrios, Nicaragua – one of the bases destined for the Liberation Air Force (http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_PBSUCCESS), before they moved to Managua (see: Cullather, Operation PBSUCCESS, p.51, i.e. CIA document no. 134974, online readable on the CIA website at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000134974.pdf). During Phase 2-A, there was an emergency strip was near San Marcos Lempa in El Salvador. See the Cable dated 13 March 54 by LINCOLN, i.e. CIA document no. 136005, readable on the CIA website at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000136005.pdf.

occur within its borders.”

During Phase Two and Three of the operation that is between 11 April and 21 May 54, 2 C-47s carried a total of 207,717 lbs of cargo from “FJHOPEFUL” (that is France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone) to “GEORGE” in Honduras otherwise coded as “airport X located DC080168”. Probably, this was Tegucigalpa in Honduras. On 17 April 54, 2 “category I aircraft”, i.e. both C-47s, had to carry 5,000 pounds of cargo each to Toncontin International Airport, Tegucigalpa – the first scheduled to arrive at 1700 hours TEGU time, the second at 1800 hours TEGU, i.e. Tegucigalpa or local time. On 27 April 54, 1 C-47 flew generators, batteries and other electric material to SOMERSET (Managua in Nicaragua). From 29 April 54 onwards, 2 daily flights served WSHOOFs, i.e. Honduras. “Eighty-nine tons of equipment were prepared in three forms at FJHOPEFUL. Forty-three tons were waterproofed for burial. Fifteen tons were packed for drop. Thirty-one tons were prepared for shock troop use. Prior to the staging period the entire burial and shock troop equipment had been moved to Honduras. [...] The Honduran Government allowed all staging to occur inside its borders. [...] We had 267 men in Honduras and Salvador for use as shock troops and specialists, outside of the training personnel that had been sent to Nicaragua.”

All these black C-47 flights out of FJHOPEFUL needed some cover, when operating in the Panama Air Traffic Control and Air Defense areas. So some CIA Air Operations Officers from PBCABOOSE (CIA Station, Panama?) were introduced to the local authorities as Headquarters USAF Officers on a classified project that involved 2 C-47s operating without flight plan. The following arrangement was made: “Flight Plans will be called into the cleared


380 According to the log book of “Doc” Johnson, he flew an anonymous C-47 during that time, mostly from “P” (believed to stand for FJHOPEFUL, the base in Panama) to “N” (believed to stand for SOMERSET, i.e. Managua in Nicaragua), but sometimes he also flew from “P” to “T” (believed to stand for GEORGE, i.e. Tegucigalpa in Honduras). Details come from the log book of “Doc” Johnson, pages sent by James Johnson to Tom Ziemba who kindly submitted them to the author on 13 December 2011.


382 According to the log book of “Doc” Johnson, he flew an anonymous C-47 during that time, mostly from “P” (believed to stand for FJHOPEFUL, the base in Panama) to “T” (believed to stand for GEORGE, i.e. Tegucigalpa in Honduras). Details come from the log book of “Doc” Johnson, pages sent by James Johnson to Tom Ziemba who kindly submitted them to the author on 13 December 2011.


384 Las Flores/Lempira, Honduras is given as the place where the PBSUCCESS fighters were based (World Air Forces, Guatemala, “Liberation Army Force”, at: http://aeroflight.co.uk/waf/americas/guatemala/Guatemala-af-LibAF.htm). But as a Liberation Army training camp had been established at a finca near Tegucigalpa (http://de.wikipedia.org/wiki/Operation_PBSUCCESS), and as CAT employee George Stevens “ended up flying as crew chief on C-47 to Tegucigalpa”, Honduras, where he stayed for several weeks until he was sent to Managua (Interview with George Stevens conducted by Prof. William Leary at Santa Barbara, CA on 11 September 1985, written resume, at: UTD/Leary/B43F5), “George” is believed to stand for Tegucigalpa.


387 See Cable dated 28 April 54 from LINCOLN, i.e. CIA document no. 136013, readable on the CIA website at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000136013.pdf. According to a LINCOLN cable by LINCOLN dated 13 March 54, i.e. CIA document no. 136005, during Phase 2-B the primary strip in Honduras was Las Flores and the secondary strip Tegucigalpa Minucial Airport (see http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000136005.pdf).

ATC controllers in this manner: PBCABOOSE Air Operations Officer telephones ATC and asks for the Senior Controller. Upon getting the Senior Controller the Air Operations Officer states, ‘This is Kilroy’. The controller answers, ‘Yard bird here.’ Air Ops then says, ‘No. 1 (or No. 2) out at 1700 for 10.’ The controller acknowledges by, ‘Roger 1 out at 1700 for 10.’ This means that No.1 will take off at 1700 and expects to return at 0300. No. 1 is also known as ‘Fireball’ and ‘1005’. No. 2 is known as ‘Skyrocket’ and ‘2050’. The last two numbers, or 05 and 50 change daily and are the day of the month for No. 1, and the day of the month reversed for No. 2. This is all based on local time, so No. 1 could take off at 1700 the fifth of the month and be 1005. At 0001 hours the number will change to 1006. No. 2 will be 2050 until 2400 and 2060 from then on. The flights will make no transmissions except in the event of an emergency. […] During the time the flights are airborne, ATC will reserve the published minimum safe altitude for our aircraft.**387** Things were made easier by the fact that France Field near Colón was a former USAF Base (“France Air Force Base”), which had been “deactivated on 1 November 1949 by the United States Air Force due to budgetary reductions, and turned into a civil airport in the United States Canal Zone Colon Airport.” […] “The USAF, however, maintained jurisdiction over the airport until 31 December 1973, and it was occasionally used as a satellite field of Albrook AFB.”388

Arbenz Guzmán was not passive during all that time. In May 1954, the Swedish flag vessel *MS Alfhem* had picked up, at the port of Szczecin in Poland, a large quantity of Czechoslovak arms and ammunition destined for the Government of Guatemala, but officially said to be a “straw charter” and declared to be a load of shovels, nails, machine tools and so on by the ship’s Bill of Lading, which did not mention the 2,000 tons or so of weapons and ammo – allegedly worth 10 million dollars. At Puerto Barrios in Guatemala, the weapons were loaded onto rail cars and sent to the capital. Anti-government forces tried to blow up the train on its way, but this did not work. So, after the arrival of the *MS Alfhem*, the US led Caribbean Sea Frontier established air-sea patrols in the Gulf of Honduras to control arms shipments to Guatemala.389 These patrol missions were flown by US Navy A-26 (JD-1) Intruders from Guantanamo Naval Air Station, Cuba, one of which – piloted by LT. John Bell – was lost at sea the evening of 22 May 1954. His son Lee Bell reports: “The *Alfhem* was finishing the unloading of armaments that weekend, a 2nd or 3rd vessel was rumored bound for Puerto Barrios, President Eisenhower ordered the search of foreign vessels that day and an Admiral was awaiting a reconnaissance report from the area. The incident report received was never classified nor sanitized, and the incident was not publicly mentioned. Normal operations was their mission and cause unknown. Both crew were not recovered. Recovered, curiously for a JD-1, was a bomb bay gas tank which would have put Puerto Barrios in range with a possible crash landing off Guantanamo upon their return.”390

Possibly as a result of the *Alfhem* affair, US supplies were hastily flown from the Canal Zone to Nicaragua: “On 2 June orders came through to move to SOMERSET [believed to stand for Managua], the advance base for purpose of dispatching bundles and supplies to the troops, also making up of the new drop bundles to meet requirements from LINCOLN [name razed out] and [name razed out] proceeded to Somerset, arriving there the night of 2 June, at which time they remained for 2 days with the KMFLUSH [that is Nicaraguan] troops at the local air base. They reported in to BRODFROST, and were given the assignment of preparing 50 new air drop bundles consisting of rifles and ammo, in addition to the 115 bundles on

388 See https://en.wikipedia.org/wiki/Enrique_Adolfo_Jim%C3%A9nez_Airport.
390 E-mail dated 23 January 2011, kindly sent by Lee Bell to Paul Oelkrug who forwarded it to the author.
hand. During this time shipments were received of supplies and equipment from FJHOPEFUL, and they supervised the unloading and its storage at Somerset.”

These new supplies were brought in during Phase Three A of the operation, when, between 24 May and 29 June 54, the 2 C-47s carried a total of 199,670 lbs of cargo from FJHOPEFUL, that is from France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone, to SOMERSET or Managua. It was during this operation that a 3rd C-47 joined the fleet, when it was ferried from FJHOPEFUL to SOMERSET on 6 June 54.

The need of a 3rd C-47 had been felt quite early: On 3 March 54, “Lincoln” cabled to “Director” (believed to be the CIA Headquarters) that, as those 2 C-47s would be available only from 25 March “thru ‘D’ Day plus 10”, they “request action be taken thru Chief, AMD to obtain ‘option-to-buy’ one C-47 on local market. Our understanding from iden ref that several aircraft are up for sale Washington area and ‘option-to-buy’ would insure availability standby aircraft.” The “Air Support Plan” of 5 March 54 speaks of “1) Two USAF C-124s (Phase One only) 2) Two Agency sterile C-47s […] 3) Option to buy additional C-47 in event of emergency”. The Operational crews were to include “four sterile contract pilots”. These were the 4 CAT pilots mentioned above, as the paper also states that “with the decision that CAT pilots will be utilized in the air support operations of this project, it will be necessary to afford them a plausible cover story in the event mechanical difficulties or political developments should lead to the confiscation of the aircraft and equipment and/or the internment of the pilots.”

On 8 April 54, the question of the 3rd C-47 was still open: “Preliminary investigation indicates that an additional cargo-type C-47 may be procured through a charter arrangement at an estimated price of approximately $3,500 per month. It is possible to lease this aircraft in the name of a cleared broker and either sublease to a fictitious firm or use in the name of the cleared broker. […] PM/AMD is also investigating the possibility of obtaining a C-47 from the Air Force on a loan basis. […] It is considered feasible to switch one of the CAT pilots to first pilot on the third C-47.” As the C-47 did not arrive, one month later, on 3 May 54, Malcolm H. Brodfrost, Chief, Air Support, proposed to acquire a Douglas A-20 that was parked at Managua, stating: “The A-20 type aircraft would be ideal for making leaflet drops. […] In the event we use […] one of the CAT pilots, we could work up a plausible cover story.” But while that A-20 did not join the Liberation Air Force, on 4 May 54 the Progress Report for PBSUCCESS states: “Arrangements were completed by Chief, Administration, DD/P and AMD for the assignment of one C-47 aircraft to PBSUCCESS for use in connection with air operations from FJHOPEFUL.”

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Operations in Guatemala as noted in “Doc” Johnson’s log book\textsuperscript{398}  
(with kind permission from James Johnson)

Phase Four of the operation was the actual invasion, supported by most aircraft of the \textit{Liberation Air Force}. Head of this new \textit{Liberation Air Force} was Fred Sherwood, former US Air Attaché with the US Embassy in Guatemala. Already in January 54, leaflets had been dropped over Guatemala City demanding the ouster of Arbenz and announcing liberation to come. On 21 May 54, Fred DeLarm and Carlos Cheeseman, 2 former US military pilots, flew a C-47 on a leaflet-dropping mission over Guatemala, and similar missions continued until June 54 with aircraft operating from both Nicaragua and Honduras.\textsuperscript{399} On or after 1 June 54, rebel troops were to be landed at Guatemala City airport,\textsuperscript{400} but this plan seems not to have been put into action. On 13 June 54, the P-38 had engine problems after such a drop mission and made an emergency landing in Honduras on return. During the night of 14 June 54, the 3 C-47s dropped arms at ammunition near Tiquisate.\textsuperscript{401} On 18 June 54 a C-47 dropped more leaflets over the capital, this time announcing that the invasion was imminent. The same afternoon, 2 F-47Ns dropped small fragmentation bombs, strafed the National Palace, and then attacked targets at the port of San Jose, Guatemala; and about midnight, a C-47 made a harassment flight over Guatemala City. Also on 18 June 54, 3 \textit{Fuerza Aérea Guatemalteca} pilots defected in 2 AT-6s. In the morning of 19 June 54, one F-47N strafed the air force section of the capital’s La Aurora airport, and then attacked the towns of Chiquimula and Zacapa, while a Cessna 180 dropped a hand grenade and a stick of dynamite over the fuel storage at Puerto Barrios and an F-47 strafed the Army barracks of Jutiapa. The same day,\textsuperscript{399}

\textsuperscript{398} The codes probably mean: N = Nicaragua (probably Managua), P = Panama (France Field, Colón, Panama Canal Zone), T = Tegucigalpa in Honduras, † = drops to the rebel troops.

\textsuperscript{399} CAT employee George Stevens “ended up flying as crew chief on C-47 to Tegucigalpa”, Honduras, where he stayed for several weeks until he was sent to Managua (Interview with George Stevens conducted by Prof. William Leary at Santa Barbara, CA on 11 September 1985, written resume, at: UTD/Leary/B43F5).

\textsuperscript{400} See the Air Operations estimate of 1 June 54, i.e. CIA document no. 937494, readable on the CIA website at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_000937494.pdf.

\textsuperscript{401} See Cable dated 16 June 54 from LINCOLN to CIA Headquarters, i.e. CIA document no. 136223, published at http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000136223.pdf.
some of the C-47s were used to drop supplies to the rebel forces. On 20 June, at least one armed AT-6 and 3 F-47s attacked small towns in southern Guatemala to give the impression of air support to the invading Armas forces. The same day, the P-38 flown by William Tyler and another CIA pilot attacked the city of Coban, was damaged by ground fire and made an emergency landing in Mexico. On 21 June 54, the F-47N that attacked Zacapa (former 44-89400) was hit by ground fire and then destroyed during the crash-landing in Honduras. After some more fighting, 2 ex-Texas ANG F-51D Mustangs joined the Liberation Air Force in Honduras on 27 June 54, and their appearance seems to have been crucial to the show of force that toppled Arbenz who, on 27 June 54, declared that he was stepping down, giving the Presidency to Colonel Carlos Enrique Díaz. Also on 27 June 54, the Liberation Air Force was authorized to attack the Fuerza Aérea Guatemalteca at Puerto Barrios (“Bond”), but this was probably no longer necessary. As the CIA wanted Castillo Armas and not Díaz to be President, the Liberation Air Force was ordered to continue its attacks: On 28 June, the SS Springfjord, a British freighter that was supposed to carry arms to the loyal Guatemalan forces, was bombed at San Jose harbor by the P-38M flown by Ferdinand Schoup, and on 29 June 54, the Government radio station was attacked and destroyed by Liberation Air Force aircraft. The same day, an F-47N (former 44-89265) piloted by Bob Wade was hit by ground fire at Zacapa and then destroyed in the crash-landing at Quetzaltepeque, near Chiquimula; but Wade was only slightly injured in the crash. Finally, on 1 July 54, US Ambassador John E. Peurifoy convinced Colonel Díaz to accept Colonel Castillo Armas as the new President, and that meant the end of the attacks. The exact role played in the whole operation by CAT employees is unknown, as is the identity and the fate of most Liberation Air Force aircraft – except for the 6 F-47N Thunderbolts. Two of the C-47s were first moved to Panama and then returned to the original sources, while the third C-47 became FAG0515 of the Fuerza Aérea Guatemalteca. But some sources state that some of the pilots of Liberation Air Force aircraft that had been shot down spoke Chinese.

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402 For 18 and 19 June 54, “Doc” Johnson’s log book notes that he flew an anonymous C-47 between “P” (i.e. the home base in Panama) to “N” (i.e. Managua in Nicaragua), then to “+” (which probably means drops to the rebel forces) and back to “N” or “P”. Details come from the log book of “Doc” Johnson, pages sent by James Johnson to Tom Ziemba who kindly submitted them to the author on 13 December 2011.
406 “Remaining two C-47s should handle move to HOPEFUL and return to original sources” (J. D. Esterline in his memorandum called “Disposition of CALLIGERIS aircraft” of 1 July 54, i.e. CIA document no. 920856 published at: http://www.foia.cia.gov/sites/default/files/document_conversions/89801/DOC_0000920856.pdf).
408 Prados, Presidents’ secret wars, p. 101.
VII) OPERATION “HAIK”: INDONESIA 1958

Among the missions in which personnel of CAT Inc. was involved were flights to support anti-Sukarno rebels in Indonesia. But as those operations have been treated several times in great detail, I can resume here only those aspects that involved CAT Inc. and its personnel. Exaggerated cold war fears of Western politicians had made of President Sukarno, who already in July 1945 had declared that “Internationalism” was one of his political principles, a statesman turning to Communism. Already in 1951 and 1952, CAT pilot Donald E. Teeters made 3 or 4 flights to Indonesia in a CAT PBY-5A, and Robert E. Rousselot made one such flight – apparently secret support missions to Indonesian rebels and other “black” flights. But these were small-scale operations.

The real conflict began only in 1957. Sukarno’s main problem within Indonesia was to overcome local rebels as the fundamentalist Dar ul Islam movement or separatist movements against the central government that appeared on Sumatra (where 2 Army Colonels had taken over the administration of Central and Northern Sumatra in December 56), on Ambon, on Sulawesi (the former Celebes), and on other islands in 1957/58. When a state of emergency was declared in March 1957, the rebels requested assistance from the United States who, at that time, were slow to react. The situation aggravated in late 57, when President Sukarno began a policy of sanctions against the Dutch remaining in Indonesia, openly supported in this by the Communists. In November 57, US President Eisenhower approved a special program to support the rebels: Project HAIK. On 10 February 58, the rebel leader of Central Sumatra issued an ultimatum to the Djakarta government to resign. When that did not happen, a Revolutionary Government (PRRI) was formed at Padang, Sumatra, on 15 February, which was joined by the PERMESTA group of rebels from northern Sulawesi on 17 February 58. On 21 February 58, government aircraft bombed the PRRI’s radio station at Padang and one day later the PERMESTA camp at Manado.

In the meantime, the CIA had set up training camps in the Philippines, and military supplies were shipped to the PRRI and to PERMESTA. On 22 February 58, CAT C-46 “146”, piloted by Capt. William Gaddie, plus a second CAT C-46 piloted by Capt. Paul Holden, were loaded at Okinawa with pallets of arms and supplies for the Indonesian rebels. Then, the aircraft picked up CIA men Roger McCarthy, James McElroy, and Garfield Thorsrud and flew from Okinawa to Clark AFB. From there they continued to Saigon and Songhla in Southern Thailand, where CIA men Tom Fosmire and “Tony” Poe entered the planes as additional kickers. Then, after dark, the 2 C-46s flew to Padang, where they dropped their cargo – 24 50-cal. heavy machine guns with ammunition to the rebels at Tabing airfield, and returned via Songhla. On 5 March 58, a CIA C-54 that had arrived from Wiesbaden, piloted by CAT Capt. Gordon Smith, delivered another load of weapons to the rebels at Pekanbaru on Sumatra, and again McElroy and McCarthy volunteered as kickers, saving the

410 In 1951, CAT had only PBY-5A B-819 (msn 851), as B-825 (msn 1803 ex BuA 48441) was acquired only in July 1952 (Minutes of Meeting of Board of Directors of CAT Inc of 21 July 1952, in: UTD/CIA/B4F6A).
411 Interview conducted by Prof. William Leary with Robert E. Rousselot at Okay, OK, on 10 August 1987, transcript preserved at: UTD/Leary/B43F4.
412 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.52.
413 Leary (“Indonesia”, p. 4, outline, formerly in: UTD/Leary/Ser.I, B11F11, now probably in: UTD/Leary/B70F4) quotes from an interview with Gar Thorsrud who believed that the crews of the C-46s were Judkins/Holden/Fosmire/Thorsrud and Sims/Walton/Poshepny/McCarthy. He believed that the drops took place on 26 February 58.
415 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp.56-59.
aircraft when the cargo threatened to break through the cargo doors during circling; on the return flight, the C-54 was refueled at Changi AFB, Singapore. Another C-54 mission to Pekanbaru involving 2 CIA C-54s from Wiesbaden was flown on 11/12 March 58 by Polish crews. The airdrop was successful, but that time, the planes were spotted. So, early in the next morning, Indonesian paratroopers took the drop zone, and the CIA ordered that air deliveries to Sumatra be suspended. During the following days, a CAT PBY successfully infiltrated 3 CIA paramilitary advisors to the Padang-area of Sumatra and then took off for Manado on Sulawesi with 5 dissidents who were scheduled for training at Saipan. But the situation on Sumatra was beyond recovery, and so the advisors were recovered by submarine on 2 May 58.

All attention now focused on Sulawesi. Probably since late March 58, CAT C-46s regularly delivered supplies to Manado on Sulawesi to keep operations going, that is fuel, ammunition, spare parts and other items. “They would take off from Clark around midnight and arrive at Manado around daybreak. All off-loading had to be done by hand, using slings, since there were no fork lifts or other handling equipment. That was hard work. […] While the cargo was taken off their aircraft the crew would have breakfast and then start back towards the Philippines” – refueling initially at Zamboanga in the southern Philippines and later at an abandoned WW-II airfield on the Philippine island of Tawi-Tawi, where fuel was brought in by other means. Bob Rousselot recalled that, when he flew CAT C-46s from Clark to Manado in March 58 to set up the base, the aircraft usually arrived just after dawn, unloaded quickly and departed. On 11 April 58, the US decided to use B-26s for the air strikes. On 12 April 58, a CAT C-46 delivered barrels of aviation fuel as well as bombs, rockets and ammunition to Mapanget airfield for the first B-26 bombing mission, and since that time, CAT C-46s regularly shuttled in supplies from Clark AFB. Bob Rousselot made 3 or 4 of these C-46 flights, Eddie Sims, and William Welk also made a number of flights. A deployment order dated 21 April 58 placed 8 CAT employees on 120 days of unspecified temporary duty: John Lee, Hugh Marsh, Thomas Sailer, George Stubbs, Ronald Sutphin, and Dale Williamson were the transport pilots intended for supply flights to Sulawesi, the other 2 were B-26 pilot Allen Pope and CAT navigator Cyril (“Pinky”) Pinkava. CAT navigator Pinkava assisted with those supply flights, and sometimes, even CAT Vice President Bob Rousselot came to Mapanget to make a personal inspection of the operation – as on 15 May

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416 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp.64-66; Leary, Manuscript, p.295, in: UTD/Leary/B19F3.
417 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp.72-74; Leary, Manuscript, pp.295/6, in: UTD/Leary/B19F3.
418 Leary (“Indonesia”, pp. 4.5, outline, formerly in: UTD/Leary/Ser.I, B11F11, now probably in: UTD/Leary/ B70F4) quotes from an interview with CIA man James D. Haase, conducted on 21 August 1993: Written summary: “Haase recalls that it was around St. Patrick’s Day, March 1958, when he was sent to Sumatra. […] Haase met Tony Poe in Singapore […] where he was briefed. He flew to Subic Bay via CAT. They loaded equipment on the PBY. Haase, Poe, and a commo man (one already was on Sanga Sanga area) were flown in a large lake in the mountains of northern Sumatra (they stopped in Borneo en route) that was held by Simbolon’s troops. They brought in a shipment of arms and a box of money (they later tried to carry the money out in their packs but it was too heavy and they buried it). Landry was there to meet them. A CIA officer under cover at the consulate on Sumatra (Dean Almy) had made the initial contact with Colonel Simbolon. […] Haase recalls that there was one later airdrop.”
419 Leary, Manuscript, pp.296/7, in: UTD/Leary/B19F3.
421 Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, p. 27, including quotation; apparently, this was Sanga Sanga airport.
424 Interview conducted by Prof. William Leary with Robert E. Rousselot at Okay, OK, on 10 August 1987, transcript preserved at: UTD/Leary/B43F4.
425 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.207 note 23.
58, when Mapanget was attacked by AURI aircraft. On 20 May 58, a CAT C-46 evacuated Mapanget carrying back to Clark AFB the CAT mechanics, the Filipino army training team, and the CIA men.

Another CAT aircraft that was involved in supporting the Indonesian rebels was a PBY initially flown by Don Teeters. Already in the second half of March 58, the PBY picked up CIA men James D. Haase and Tony Poe at Subic Bay in the Philippines and brought them, together with a pallet of small arms and a box of Indonesian rupiahs, down to Lake Singkarak forty kilometers northeast of Padang. The following day, four Indonesians chosen for secret training on Saipan were flown out. On 16 April 58, Don Teeters landed his PBY again at Lake Singkarak and that time, five Indonesians climbed on board for special training on Saipan. Initially, the CAT PBY to support the Indonesian rebels had been B-819, but this was exchanged for B-825 on 15 April 58. This CAT PBY-5A joined the AUREV at Mapanget to fly reconnaissance missions around Sulawesi, identify targets for the B-26s and act as search-and-rescue protection for the B-26 pilots; this PBY was already on place, when the first 2 AUREV Mustangs arrived on 20 April 58. From 1 to 4 May 58, Connie Seigrist ferried B-819 Taipei-Cubi Point (near Manila, Philippines)-Tawi Tawi (southern Philippines)-Manado: “My first tour of duty in Menado, 4th through 12th May, was devoted to recon patrol around the main island of Celebes and its surrounding islands looking for any sea traffic that could be a threat to our safety. We were also available for rescue flights around the clock. Our recon flights ranged from sea level to no more than 5,000 feet. Sea level flights were usually conducted up close to those lengths of coastline where we could look directly under the tall trees overhanging the water and see if the trees were being used as a canopy for boats. The 5,000 feet level was used to give a wide observational area while that height was still low enough to the water to see smaller seacraft. Flights flown in overcast skies were always flown beneath the clouds. PBY flights covering B-26 strikes were flown usually at the 3,000 feet level in a large circle remaining safely away from the strike area and yet close enough to land in the water immediately if necessary to pick up a downed crew. The 3,000 feet level was also high enough to observe and look for incoming aircraft that could disrupt the strike.”

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426 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp. 89 and 126.
427 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.146.
428 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp.79-81.
429 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.95.
Tifore and Maju and to Tolotio airfield. On 8 May 58, after PERMESTA troops had taken the town and the airfield of Jalailo on Halmahera Island, a CAT PBY landed there and flew PERMESTA’s commander-in-chief Col. Sumual to Minahasa for talks with CIA man Cecil Cartwright.\textsuperscript{433}

\textbf{CAT PBY-5A B-825 at Taipei on 17 October 53, all photos taken by Enos C. Kirkpatrick (UTD/Kirkpatrick/ photos nos. 1KP-18-PB872, 1KP-18-PB876, and 1KP-18-PB871)}

\textbf{CAT-operated PBY-5A B-819 at Taipei on 17 October 53, at that time still owned by WEI (UTD/Kirkpatrick/ photo no. 1KP-18-PB869)}

\textsuperscript{433} Conboy/Morrison, \textit{Feet to the fire}, p.121.
As the closest active Air Force airfield from where air strikes against the rebel base of Manado could be staged was on Flores Island, that is out of range for the rebel B-26s and P-51s, on 8 May 58 plans were made to use PBY B-819 as a bomber. Connie Seigrist recalls: “I immediately checked B-819 for bomb shackles in its wings and much to our disappointment found they had been removed. What made matters worse was the manual release cables from the cockpit to the bomb shackle station were corroded solidly in their conduits. To use B-819 as a bomber another bomb delivery system had to be improvised. 9 May – [After a flight to Moratai Island], Tom, an agent knowledgeable on armament, and I spent the remainder of the day loading a 250 pound fragmentation bomb aboard the PBY in the waist gunner’s blister located midsection of the aircraft. The blister was located about three feet above the floor and slanted outward. The bomb was heavy and compact making an awkward maneuver to lift it up and over the blister opening. We decided there had to be a platform built level with the bottom of the blister opening making it possible to roll it out on signal from the cockpit.[…] Tom worked most of the night to complete the platform. 10 May – Capt. Beale, Tom, and I devoted our morning to loading four bombs aboard B-819, tying one to the platform, installed the arming unit, and flew to a small atoll nearby. […] Tom […] rolled the bomb out of the blister. The bomb hit exactly on target. […] The next runs each bomb tumbled in its fall never streamlining in the air leaving no chance for the arming mechanism to activate for a successful impact. […] Tom nor anyone could offer any suggestions to overcome the tumbling problem and with the greatest disappointment we had to drop the Flores mission idea.”

434 After an uneventful patrol flight on 11 May, the following day Connie Seigrist accompanied a strike mission in his PBY B-819: “12 May – We departed early to fly cover for a lone B-26 flown by Capt. Beale while on his strike. While we circled he sank a small Navy vessel in the bay of a place named Biak 200 NM southwest of Menado. The vessel was
in shallow water and it settled a few feet to set on the bottom close to shore. Capt. Beale returned to Menado and we continued on patrol. The route we patrolled was east from Biak, over the adjoining islands, continuing east along the north coast of Mangole Island, turning north at Obi Island, then up the west coastal areas of the Halmahera group of islands, turning west before reaching the coast of Moratai, and returned to Menado landing late in the afternoon. [...] When we returned from this same flight we found our parking place under the trees had been taken by one of our C-46s from Clark while we had been out on patrol leaving us no choice but park on the old commercial parking ramp in the open with B-819 fully exposed to all eyes.”435 But just at daybreak, PBY B-819 was destroyed by an AURI attack on 13 May 58, while parked at Mapanget airfield, and in the evening. Connie Seigrist returned to Clark AFB in a CAT C-46.436 Immediately CAT sent PBY-5A B-825 as a replacement, which was piloted by CAT pilot David “Red” Kern.437 But when the CIA closed the Mapanget operation, B-825 was flown straight to Taiwan on 20 or 21 May 58.438

The most famous part of the CIA’s Indonesian operations was of course the B-26s. In late February 58, a task force consisting of 2 former USAF TB-26Bs and 1 B-26C as well as three ex Philippine AF F-51Bs was prepared at Clark AFB for Operation Haik. The aircraft were stripped of all markings, and the B-26s were converted to B-26Bs and painted overall black.439

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437 Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, p.35.
439 Hagedorn/Hellström, Foreign Invaders, p.123.
Operation *Haik* B-26B 44-34376 taken at Clark AFB on 20 March 58 by Merle Olmsted (with kind permission from Merle Olmsted)

In March 58, the CIA established a rebel air force at Manado on Sulawesi. On 21 March 58, President Sukarno ordered AURI, the Indonesian Air Force, to strike rebel targets on Sumatra and Sulawesi. On 11 April 58, CAT pilot Ron Sutphin ferried one all-black B-26 from Taiwan to Clark AFB. In response to the strikes ordered by President Sukarno, which had been carried out by AURI B-25s and F-51s, the first CIA B-26s were sent to Sulawesi on 12 April 58. The first mission undertaken by the rebel air force, i.e. the AUREV (Angkatan Udara Revolusioner), was flown on 13 April 58, but Captain Józef Jeka’s B-26B crashed into the trees shortly after take-off from Mapanget airfield. The other B-26B, piloted by Captain Józef Skulicz, bombed the airport at Makassar on southern Sulawesi and headed back. A CAT C-46, piloted by Thomas Sailer and Truman Barnes, brought the dead bodies back to Clark.

On 18 April, Indonesian government troops attacked the rebels on Sumatra who had to withdraw. At the same time, four more B-26s were prepared at Clark AFB for Operation *Haik*, but these aircraft were in a largely natural metal color scheme. The big problem, however, was the lack of pilots, and so Bob Rousselot, CAT’s Vice President for operations, was asked to select some CAT pilots to fly the B-26s. Rousselot chose William H. Beale and

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440 PBY-5A B-819 was destroyed at Mapanget airfield, Manado, Sulawesi, Indonesia, on 13 May 58. One of the P-51s was damaged in that attack (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p. 42, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11 and Leary/LeSchack, *Project Coldfeet*, p.111; Conboy/Morrison, *Feet to the fire*, pp.123-27, and Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, pp.34/5, give 15 May 58).

441 Hagedorn/Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p.123.

442 Conboy/Morrison, *Feet to the fire*, p.191 note 22.

443 According to Hagedorn/Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p.125, and to Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, pp.25-27, three B-26s were sent to Mapanget on 12 April 58, that is 44-34268, 44-34376, and 44-34690. According to Conboy/Morrison (*Feet to the fire*, pp.88/9), only 2 B-26Bs were flown from Clark AFB to Mapanget on 12 April 58, crewed by 2 Polish pilots and 2 Polish navigators who had previously flown secret missions in Europe. But there must have been 3 B-26s originally, because in spite of the loss of a B-26 that occurred on 13 April (probably 44-34268 or 44-34690, whose fates are unknown: see Hagedorn / Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p.125), Beale and Pope both flew their own B-26 already on 27 and 28 April 58 – unless Pope had arrived in his own B-26 on 27 April 58 (Conboy/Morrison, *Feet to the fire*, pp.114/5).

444 Conboy/Morrison, *Feet to the fire*, pp.89-91; Leary, Manuscript, pp.297/8, in: UTD/Leary/B19F3.

445 They included 44-35221, 44-35242, and 44-35441 (Hagedorn / Hellström, *Foreign Invaders*, p.123; Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, p. 32). The 4th B-26 was probably 44-35625, which reemerged as “6248” among the former *Haik* B-26s that were used for training at Tainan from 1959 onwards (Memorandum no. DFO-64-444 of 17 August 1964, in: http://www.air-america.net/images/SAT/sat-b26a.jpg ).
Allen L. Pope. Beale arrived at Mapanget on 19 April 58 and flew his first B-26 strike mission the following day, with more missions to follow; Pope arrived on 27 April 58, flying his first mission even the same day. On 28 April 58, a B-26 flown by A. Pope strafed and bombed Djailalo Airfield and inflicted considerable damage.\textsuperscript{446} Two P-51 Mustangs arrived at Mapanget on 20 April 58, flown in from Clark AFB by the same two pilots who would also fly them on attack missions for AUREV, that is by ex-Philippine Air Force pilots Antonio Dedal ("Tony") and Reynaldo Reyes ("Rex").\textsuperscript{447} The targets of all those P-51 and B-26 missions were airfields that were or could be used by the Indonesian Air Force for attacks against Sulawesi,\textsuperscript{448} followed by further attacks on government airfields and installations during the next few weeks, including some located on the islands of Borneo, Halmahera and the Central Moluccas.\textsuperscript{449} On 1 May 58, Beale flew his B-26 back to Clark AFB for a scheduled rest, while Pope was hit over Ambon, but managed to return his B-26 to Mapanget on one engine. Upon request of the US Ambassador at Djakarta, B-26 strikes were suspended for a five day period. But on 6 May 58, representative of the State Department, the Department of Defense and the CIA at Washington decided that full B-26 and P-51 support should be given to Col. Sumual in his attempt to retake the Palu/Donggala area.\textsuperscript{450} On 7 May, Pope’s B-26 had been repaired and could attack Ambon again.\textsuperscript{451} On 9 May 58, Beale was back at Mapanget, and Pope took his leave from the cockpit.\textsuperscript{452} A couple of days later, Beale quit the program so that Pope remained the sole B-26 pilot, but Connie Seigrist, whose PBY had been destroyed on 13 May 58, left Mapanget for Clark AFB to get a second B-26 and undergo a conversion checkout at

\textsuperscript{446} Leary, Manuscript, p.298, in: UTD/B19F3.
\textsuperscript{447} Conboy/Morrison, \textit{Feet to the fire}, pp. 87 and 101/2.
\textsuperscript{448} Conboy/Morrison, \textit{Feet to the fire}, pp.99-107.
\textsuperscript{449} Conboy/Morrison, \textit{Feet to the fire}, pp.114-19.
\textsuperscript{450} Leary, Manuscript, p.299, in: UTD/Leary/B19F3.
\textsuperscript{451} Conboy/Morrison, \textit{Feet to the fire}, pp.119-21.
\textsuperscript{452} Conboy/Morrison, \textit{Feet to the fire}, p.122.
The CIA reacted quickly to the Indonesian attack against Mapanget: On 16 May, 12 B-26s were officially handed over at Clark AFB to AUREV’s representative Lendy Tumbelak. During the following days, three more B-26s were sent to AUREV; on the evening of 16 May, Seigrist arrived at Mapanget aboard one of those bombers. Also on 17 May, AUREV received three more ex-Philippine Air Force Mustangs at Clark that were stripped of their markings on 18 May, awaiting delivery to Mapanget.

On 17 May 58, Seigrist and Pope flew a B-26 strike mission onto Ambon Island in the southern Moluccas. Connie Seigrist recalls: “17 May – Within 2 hours after landing at Menado my B-26 was loaded with fuel, four 500 lb bombs, and 50 caliber ammunition to make a strike on airfield targets in the Ambon Island area 360 NM southeast of Menado. There were two B-26s scheduled for the sortie. Capt. Pope’s aircraft designated Bluebird One was given the Ambon Island target. I was designated Bluebird Two with an airfield at Sepa on the south coast of Ceram about 60 miles east of Ambon for my target. I was instructed to destroy any aircraft parked around the airfield, not to shoot into buildings, and to proceed to assist Bluebird One after my target providing I had fuel enough remaining with sufficient ammunition to be of assistance to him.” When Seigrist started the engines, the aircraft literally jumped straight up off the ground. The Agency radio operator sitting in the back of the B-26 had accidentally salvoed the 2,000 lbs of bombs; as the bombs did not have the falling distance to arm, there was no explosion, but the radio operator refused to fly. Connie Seigrist continues: “It was getting too late to reload the bombs and make my target on schedule. With the time running so close I departed without the operator and the bombs. I found my target and strafed two B-25s parked under camouflage. […] I flew down the runway practically touching the runway looking to both sides and spotted two P-51s under heavy brush. I made a strafing run on the brush coving the two P-51s and felt with confidence they were totally disabled.” After shooting down another P-51, Seigrist had to return home, because he was low on fuel. After their two B-26s had taken off from Manado, a call came in from the State Department “to call off the mission”, but the two aircraft could not be reached. While Seigrist was shot at, but could return to Mapanget airfield, where his B-26 veered off the end of the strip upon landing and remained there until the airfield was captured by government troops, Pope’s B-26 (call sign “Bluebird One”) was shot down during the air strike on 17 May 58. Pope and his wireless operator Harry Rantung bailed out, were captured and put to jail.

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455 These were Mustangs 44-72917, 45-11369, and 45-11590 (Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, p.35).
458 Trest, Air Commando One, p.81.
459 This was probably 44-35441; see Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign Invaders, p.125 and the photo there.
460 This B-26B has been thought to be former 44-35221, but 44-35221 later re-emerged as “8264” within the B-26 fleet based at Tainan in the early sixties (Memorandum no. DFO-64-444 of 17 August 64, published at: http://www.air-america.net/images/SAT/sat-b26a.jpg ). The B-26 shot down was probably 44-34268 or 44-34690, whose fates are unknown (see Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign Invaders, p.125).
461 Most sources give 18 May 58 as the date when A. Pope was shot down, but Connie Seigrist gives 17 May 58 (Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, pp. 42-44, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11).
462 Pope was held captive for 19 months before being brought to trial in a military court. There he was found to be guilty and sentenced to death. But the death penalty was not carried out, and he was released in 1962 (Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, 132-40; Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, pp.36/7; e-mail dated 23 March 2006, kindly sent to the author by Steve Stevens).
On 18 May 58, Connie Seigrist was to bomb and strafe the airfield at Makassar 540 NM southwest of Manado, but his B-26 could not take off for mechanical problems. On 19 May 58, his aircraft was repaired, and so he took off with four 500 lb bombs and full ammunition to make contact and attack an enemy destroyer that had been reported close by, but in the evening Seigrist returned to Manado without having found the ship. The same day, CAT pilots Ron Sutphin and Truman Barnes arrived from Clark with 2 new B-26s, ready to take off from Mapanget. But they made only some patrol flights, as on 20 May 58, the CIA ordered the Mapanget operation to be closed down, and the same day, the CAT mechanics and the local CIA team departed in a CAT C-46 to Clark AFB. Connie Seigrist recalls: “21 May - All our aircraft, four B-26s, two P-51s, and one PBY, departed Menado for Tawi Tawi, Philippines. The two P-51s flown by Tony and Rex refueled first and continued to Clark. The PBY and four B-26s remained over night in Tawi Tawi. The B-26s had to be refueled which took most of the night using hand pumps to pump fuel from 50 gallon drums on the ground up to the wing tanks. 22 May – We proceeded to Clark, refueled, and departed for Taiwan. The PBY flew to Taipei. We flew our four B-26s to our main maintenance base in Tainan to be kept in storage. We then all returned to our respective home bases to continue our more mundane airlines jobs.” On 26 May 58, two B-26Cs that had been destined for AUREV for spares, left Clark, but probably ended up at Tainan. The four remaining B-26s destined for AUREV had their USAF markings restored in June 58, and the three spare Mustangs waiting at Clark were repainted in the colors of the Philippine Air Force to whom they were delivered on 2 July 58.

In addition to flying in supplies to the rebels, acting as search-and-rescue protection, and supplying pilots to fly the B-26s, CAT also supported the rebels with maintenance. In April 58, CAT mechanic George Stevens arrived at Mapanget. About a week later, CAT’s senior Filipino crew chef Abe Rivero was ordered to take six fellow Filipino mechanics to Manado, and after the group had been flown to Mapanget in a CAT C-46, they started to service the B-26s. After another group of Filipino mechanics had been recruited, maintenance improved also for the P-51s. All mechanics were ferried back to Clark AFB on 20 May 58.

Manado fell on 26 June 58, and by August 58, the United States began regular supplies of weapons to the Indonesian government: Thirty-seven thousand tons of rice and a million dollars’ worth of arms were immediately delivered to Indonesia as part of a US foreign aid program. Al Pope was put into jail in Indonesia and sentenced to death, and in late 1960, the CIA alerted Major Aderholt, the head of the CIA’s Okinawa Detachment, to plan to rescue Pope, if Indonesia would carry out the death sentence. The CIA sent a RB-69 to Okinawa, piloted by Major Frank “Beanie” Beard and fitted with the Fulton Skyhook retrieval system, to train the Air America crew – Jack Stiles and Woodward Forte – for the rescue; for 2 months, between January and March 61, they practiced repeatedly, but then the mission was cancelled.

At the same time, US President John F. Kennedy looked for a political solution. On 7 April 61, CIA Director Allen Dulles sent him a detailed memo about the case of Allen Pope, where Pope’s loyalty towards the US Government is highly praised: “In my opinion Pope’s conduct

463 Connie Seigrist, Memoirs, p. 44, in: UTD/Leary/B21F11; Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.144.
464 So the 4 B-26s that returned from Indonesia according to Connie Seigrist apparently were “3522” (44-35221), “3524” (44-35242), 44-34376, and 44-35625.
466 44-34643 and 44-35968 (Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign Invaders, p.125).
467 44-34346, 44-34539, 44-34620, and 44-34682 (Hagedorn / Hellström, Foreign Invaders, pp.125).
468 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.37.
469 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, p.88.
470 Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp.112/3.
both before and after his capture entitles him to our gratitude and any appropriate action to mitigate his sentence.”471 This was to inform President Kennedy and to prepare him for the visit of Indonesian President Sukarno who was to come to Washington in late April 61. When Sukarno came to Washington,472 Kennedy succeeded in getting from him the promise to release Allen Pope, but nothing happened during the following months. So Kennedy sent his brother, Attorney General Robert F. Kennedy, to enter into long and difficult negotiations with the Indonesian President, who wanted to link the release of Allen Pope with the problem of West Irian.473 It was Robert F. Kennedy who “helped substantially in the release of the death sentenced CIA bomber pilot Allen Pope”.474 During all that time, the CIA’s air crews were preparing a rescue mission. After Woodward Forte, who was to fly the Fulton Skyhook-

Memo dated 7 April 61 about the case of Allen Pope, cover and p.1, sent by CIA Director Allen Dulles to US President John F. Kennedy (kindly forwarded to the author by Jesse Walton)

471 Memo dated 7 April 61 about the case of Allen Pope, p.3, sent by CIA Director Allen Dulles to US President John F. Kennedy, kindly forwarded to the author by Jesse Walton.


473 Stig Aga Aandstad, Surrendering to Symbols. United States Policy Towards Indonesia 1961-1965, Dissertation, University of Oslo 1999, chapter 2 (at: http://aga.nye.org/oppgaver/chapter2.html): “1962 started with the West Irian conflict escalating into armed clashes. John F. Kennedy, eager not to let the colonial conflict between Indonesia and the Netherlands turn into a Cold War confrontation, decided to do two things: To pressure the Dutch into surrendering West Irian to Indonesia, and to use his brother, Robert Kennedy, to persuade Sukarno to enter negotiations. Robert Kennedy used formal pressure as well as personal appeals to fulfill his mission with Sukarno. In addition, Robert Kennedy helped substantially in the release of the death sentenced CIA bomber pilot Allen Pope, and he helped to perform a reality-check on the soundness of the new, seemingly Indonesia-friendly policy initiated by John Kennedy. The new policy prioritized Indonesia over the Netherlands in the West Irian issue and focussed on securing friends in Indonesia while outliving Sukarno.” (Conclusion to chapter 2, no pagination).

474 Aandstad, Surrendering to Symbols, Chapter 2, conclusion, no pag.
Memo dated 7 April 61 about the case of Allen Pope, pp. 2 and 3, sent by CIA Director Allen Dulles to US President John F. Kennedy (kindly forwarded to the author by Jesse Walton)

equipped RB-69, had died in an Air America accident in Laos on 13 August 61, another plan to rescue Allen Pope was conceived: In early 1962, Connie Seigrist and Doug Price practiced for an eventual mission in Indonesia, picking up mannequins with the Fulton Skyhook system in the Arizona desert using Intermountain’s new B-17 N809Z. However, this action did never take place: Pope was released on 22 August 1962 and became a pilot with Southern Air Transport.475

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475 Robbins, Air America, pp. 89-90; Hagedorn/Hellström, Foreign Invaders, pp.124/5; Hellström, “Air war in Paradise”, pp.37/8; Conboy/Morrison, Feet to the fire, pp. 163-65; Trest, Air Commando One, p.82.